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ABSTRACT

The articles in this issue reflect the theme effecting change in reading programs. Titles and authors of the articles include the following: (1) "Commentary: Becoming a Nation of Readers--the Undergraduate's View" (Michael P. French); (2) "Implementing a Reading Curriculum for the 80s and 90s" (Doris M. Cook); (3) "Strategic Teaching/Strategic Reading: An Inservice Approach with Promise" (Mary Boyd and Margaret Wilsman); (4) "Improving Reading Instruction in the Classroom: A University Course Format for Staff Development" (Richard J. Smith); (5) "New Perspectives in Effecting Change: Using Newsletters to Inservice Content Teachers" (Doug Buehl, Georgia Cook, Karen Ehlert, Doug Vance); (6) "The Content Determines the Process: An Ignored Relationship in Content Area Reading" (Cyrus F. Smith, Jr.); (7) "Writing to Learn in Social Studies" (Carol Santa, Valli Ostrem, Jim Scalf); (8) "The Classroom Teacher as an Action Researcher: Changing the Basal Reader Reading Period" (Mary Jett-Simpson); (9) "Modifying Reading Software" (Paul J. Blohm); (10) "Software Review" (Alan L. Jante); (11) "Review of a Resource" (Lee Ann Dubert); and (12) "Schemata" (ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills). (HOD)

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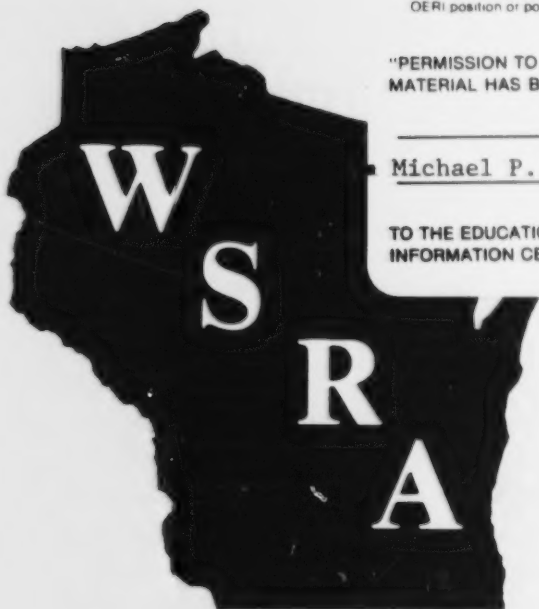
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Wisconsin State Reading
Association

Journal

Theme

EFFECTING CHANGE IN
READING PROGRAMS

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Volume 30, Number 3
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Wisconsin State Reading Association Journal

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WSRA

About the Cover

Without its 21 local councils, WSRA could not exist. This cover is dedicated to all the teachers, reading specialists, administrators, professors, parents, and others who belong to the local reading councils in Wisconsin.

Design by Michael P. French

Devine Named Journal Editor

James Devine, currently Editor of the WSRA *Focus* Newsletter, has been selected as the next *WSRA Journal* Editor. Devine was recommended to the position by the WSRA Journal Editor Search Committee, who interviewed editor candidates on January 11, 1986. He was formally approved as *Journal* Editor by the Executive Committee at their January 17 meeting in Stevens Point. Jim assumes a commitment as *Journal* Editor for the next three years. His first issue will be in Fall, 1986.

Jim has been an active reading professional for a number of years. He has served since 1984 as the first Editor of *Focus*, the WSRA Secondary Reading Newsletter. As *Focus* Editor, Jim has gained a great deal of technical expertise as well as editing experience which will serve him well as *Journal* Editor. Jim is a member of the WSRA Secondary Committee, the Madison Area Reading Council, and the Madison Area Secondary Reading Interest Group. He has presented at both WSRA and IRA conferences and has been a frequent coordinator of workshops and inservices on reading instruction. Jim is presently the reading consultant at Sun Prairie High School, where he also serves as editor of *Speaks Out*, a monthly newsletter published by the Sun Prairie Education Association.

Manuscripts for Volume 31 should now be sent to:

James Devine
2620 Richardson Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53711

**Commentary: *Becoming a Nation of Readers -
the undergraduate's view***

Michael P. French

University of Wisconsin-Madison
Madison, Wisconsin

Becoming a Nation of Readers has become a standard reading assignment in many of the teacher education programs in Wisconsin. In assigning this text to beginning teachers, several objectives are met. The new teachers are introduced to reading as a process. Further, they come to understand all the complexities that add to the development of skilled readers and, they are able to read about and discuss matters of concern to those in the field now.

At the University of Wisconsin-Madison my undergraduate education majors also read *Becoming a Nation of Readers*. As a culminating experience they are asked to write a short reaction paper. I would like to present excerpts from selected papers for two reasons: first, to show that these students really have developed an awareness of reading education, and second, to show that the future of our schools is in good hands. For if change is to take place and continue, it is the future teachers -- today's undergraduates -- who will lead the way.

A good education is necessary for the proper development and the success of a child's future. This information is known to most people as being a statement of fact. What is not known is how one can ensure that his or her child will receive such an education including the specific wants and needs the child may possess. Within the book *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading*, chapters are specifically designed to inform teachers, professionals, parents, and laymen of the importance of the reading process and what our roles as adults are in helping to make the process both beneficial and productive. It gives us an understanding of where our education system stands today and how parents as well as teachers can motivate and instill good teaching techniques and strategies into a child's reading program.

Reading is a task which should not be mistaken as a simple subject dealt with by the schools. It is a major part of the world in which we live. Without it, communication would be lost. Because of this, the importance of reading should be stressed inside and outside of the classroom. It is not just the duty of our teachers to fulfill the requirement necessary for the process of reading to take place. It is an obligation of our homes, our schools, and the societies in which we live. The best and foremost important place to start improving our children's education is through the way in which they interpret the process of reading.

Dorothy Parker

The most important thing I can do as a teacher is to provide the children with ready access to books and other reading materials. I would also have families and others close to the children encourage reading at home, provide them with materials or take them to libraries, and limit television watching. Silent reading time should be provided at school and at home. In addition, I could provide guidance to the children in choosing their materials so as to assure a mixture of genre, and I could have activities that make reading even more appealing.

Pamela Rickert

Teachers should devote more time to comprehension instruction. This is important to the field of reading because comprehension instruction promotes reading achievement. Teachers must instruct their students in strategies for extracting and organizing relevant information from what is read, and research has shown that children's learning is made easier if students are instructed in strategies that have them focus their attention on the relevant information.

Laurie Frederickson

It is suggested in *Becoming a Nation of Readers* that ready access to books is one of the keys to successful independent reading promotion. Even if the school itself has a library, the value of a classroom library should not be overlooked by the teacher. A classroom library provides continuous access to books and takes the limits off the "once a week library trip." Assuming it is economically possible, the teacher should encourage students to order books from a book club. The teacher should also try to guide students in choosing appropriate books.

It is important that the teacher include activities that will interest children in reading. Book reviews (dramatized "Siskel and Ebert" style), contests, and actually reading to the class can all spark interest in independent reading.

Marsha Lichte

We, as teachers, need to realize the importance of the parents' role in education and need to urge the parents to read with their children and follow what their children do in school. We can help make them realize the importance of their involvement.

Peggy Korson

One very important recommendation is that parents should read to preschool children and informally teach them about reading and writing. Children are very curious and can be easily motivated. If parents provide the motivation for learning by reading to their children and helping them with letter writing, they will be more anxious to learn to read and write. This way, they will already have the background experience. Children need prior knowledge of story structure and reasons why reading and writing are important means of communication. Early reading and writing experiences can assist the children in acquiring this prior knowledge.

Lisa Badding

Becoming a Nation of Readers has given me a whole new teaching philosophy. Though my parents had always stressed the importance of reading and always surrounded me with books, I never realized the importance of reading and what is involved in the reading process until I read this book.

Along with positive reading experiences, I now realize how important it is to ask students questions beyond the detail recall level. The ability to predict, conclude, summarize, and infer is important to help develop a more fulfilling comprehension experience for the student.

Liza M. Goldberg

This book changes the attitude that I take toward my education. I realize that it is no longer enough just to take the required courses and get passing grades. We must strive to be actively involved in our educational program and look for any possible opportunity to improve it. Hopefully, with hard work and endurance, teachers will someday get the recognition they deserve.

Debra Moeller

Having better teachers in the schools begins by attracting better students to careers in education. This is another important recommendation. The first step is changing society's image that anyone can teach. Parents "teach" their children every day, so how hard can it be? A more thorough understanding of the talent involved in being a good teacher will raise the esteem placed on it. Rewarding effective teachers with higher salaries will keep them in the school systems and hopefully attract brighter students to become education majors.

Jill Waldera

After reading *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, it comes as no surprise to me that there is a decline of "intellectually talented" people entering the field. What does a student in education have to look forward to? Low, frontloaded salaries, poor working conditions, lack of career ladder, and lonely unstimulating careers are common for people in education. Therefore, to become a teacher, one must be almost entirely intrinsically motivated. I now realize that a positive and constructive attitude is essential to having a long and enjoyable career in teaching. In one section of the book, it says that having low expectations for a student can cause them to achieve at low levels. I feel this self-fulfilling prophecy is also true for teachers and their own self-expectations. A depressing career is not inevitable, but being aware of possible career problems is an important step in overcoming them.

Lisa M. Terlau

Michael P. French is a lecturer in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he teaches Reading in the Elementary School. He has been editor of the WSRA Journal since 1984.



Get Involved!

'Reading Is For Everyone'

Implementing a reading curriculum for the 80's and 90's

Doris M. Cook

Department of Public Instruction
Madison, Wisconsin

Education Forward (March, 1985) summarized the important components of *A Guide to Curriculum Planning in Reading*. The central theme of the guide highlighted at that time was the Wisconsin Model for Comprehension which defines reading as an interactive constructive process rather than a product-oriented sequential set of skills.

Significant advances in research have made it possible to broaden our view of reading as a dynamic process that involves the reader's ability to construct meaning through the interaction between the information in the text and the reader's existing knowledge. In other words, the reader is an active participant in the process. The emphasis is on how the reader constructs meaning, what knowledge and skills the reader brings to the reading act, how the information is organized in the text, and the impact of context on the situation.

Given this definition of reading, the ultimate goal of a comprehensive reading program includes the development of strategic readers who can construct meaning by independently applying strategies to a variety of texts for different purposes. The development of readers who choose reading as an independent leisure-time activity and the integration of reading and writing are other goals stressed in the guide.

To make these goals attainable, a variety of suggestions and models are presented in the guide. Included are process-oriented scope and sequences for developing a K-12 curriculum that emphasize what the current research says about word meaning, word analysis, text structure, critical thinking, and reading and writing. Model lessons for developing strategic readers and for encouraging reading as a leisure-time activity are also included. The guide is not a cookbook type of document ready for instant implementation. Rather, it is a curriculum framework which local staff can use in planning a K-12 reading curriculum tailored to their needs.

The guide focuses on teachers as decision makers who plan, teach, guide, and facilitate, and it offers suggestions for modeling these roles. A written curriculum alone cannot insure attainment of goals, nor can we rely on the basal and/or other materials to accomplish this. It takes effective teachers and an instructional program that emphasizes instruction in comprehension to do the job.

The current status of the reading instructional program should serve as a starting point for planning curriculum changes based on recommendations in the guide. School districts will need to assess their present philosophy and reading program in light of the current research on reading and decide where the process of change should begin. Districts are certainly not going to throw out everything that is presently included in the curriculum -- nor do away with the basals. Teachers cannot be expected to totally reorient their teaching and organization of their classrooms. So how can a district go about making some changes in the present reading curriculum? The research on change says start small. Don't try to change everything at once. A full-scale curriculum development cycle can take as long as five years.

However and whenever the process begins, the research clearly recommends that teachers be involved in the decisions about what and how changes will be implemented. Change cannot be mandated from the top. Teachers must have a felt need for change and a sense of ownership of the project.

Based upon this important factor, a school district will need to plan an ongoing staff development program, one that will encourage teachers to examine their present reading program in light of what current research suggests about a quality reading curriculum. The recent *Reports From the Commission on Reading, Becoming a Nation of Readers*, and from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, *Reading Report Card*, would be useful publications to use along with the upcoming guide. These reports give straight-forward accounts of the state of the art and offer practical suggestions for improving reading instruction.

Excerpts from the reports are:

The knowledge is now available to make worthwhile improvements in reading throughout the United States. If the practices seen in the classrooms of the best teachers in the best schools could be introduced everywhere, improvements in reading would be dramatic ... America will become a nation of readers when these verified practices can be introduced through the country.

Becoming a Nation of Readers (1985)

There has been a conceptual shift in the way many researchers and teachers think about reading, which gives students a much more active role in the learning and reading comprehension process. This shift is reflected in changes from packaged reading programs to experiences with books and from concentration on isolated skills to practical reading and writing activities.

The Reading Report Card, NAEP (1985)

Following this careful self-assessment which should reflect both strengths and weaknesses, teachers should build upon the best of the current program and identify areas that need to be revised. These needs should then be prioritized and a long-range plan developed. Staff development should then be planned for providing teachers the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for implementing the areas targeted for the first year. Staff development efforts should be followed up with classroom demonstration, practice, and teachers' sharing. A serious attempt should be made to give teachers attention and recognition for trying new approaches and to provide incentives for their efforts. Teachers who are involved in the process are becoming more and more willing and able to translate what is now known into effective reading instruction. Some verified practices from current research highlighted in the guide and worthy of implementation are:

Students understand stories better if they are asked questions that integrate story parts than if they get asked questions that focus only on recalling facts (Beck, Omanson & McKeown, 1982; Gordon & Pearson, 1982).

Students understand informational texts better if discussions help them see how all the pieces of information in a text fit together (text structure) than if discussions are guided by a piecemeal consideration of the main points and facts (Gallagher & Pearson, 1983).

Vocabulary instruction that focuses on building rich semantic networks of related concepts facilitates transferable growth in both vocabulary and comprehension. It is even better than either a definitional or a contextual approach (Beck, Perfetti & McKeown, 1982; Johnson, Thoms-Brownoski & Pittleman, 1983).

Building background knowledge prior to reading facilitates comprehension of the upcoming topic or passage and it helps students to develop a strategy for learning and evaluating new material in terms of what they already know (Hansen, 1981; Hansen & Pearson, 1983).

Teaching comprehension skills in a model that begins with

a fairly heavy reliance on the teacher and builds toward student independence and ownership and that includes demonstrations of how and when to perform the skill is superior to a model that emphasizes practices -- assessment and more practice (Gordon & Pearson, 1982; Raphael & Pearson, 1982; Raphael, Palinscar & Brown, 1984; Baumann, 1983).

Instruction that emphasizes students' knowledge of topic text and task, and awareness of their own strategies and alternative strategies for self-monitoring results in sizeable gains in comprehension performance (Palinscar & Brown, Paris, et al, 1983).

Instruction that emphasizes inferential thinking results in greater growth in higher lever comprehension than instruction that emphasizes literal comprehension (Hansen, 1981, Hanson & Pearson, 1983; Gordon & Pearson, 1982).

Approaches that emphasize the commonalities between reading and writing are likely to prove mutually facilitative for both processes, especially when it comes to matters like author's purpose, style, and critical reading (Tierney & Pearson, 1983 and 1984).

Doris M. Cook is the Reading Supervisor at the Department of Public Instruction in Madison. She is the general editor of the reading curriculum guide.

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A GUIDE TO CURRICULUM PLANNING IN READING

"There has been a conceptual shift in the way many researchers and teachers think about reading, which gives students a much more active role in the learning and reading comprehension process. This shift is reflected in changes from packaged reading programs to experiences with books and from concentration on isolated skills to practical reading and writing activities."

The Reading Report Card
NAEP (1985)

CONTENTS

Reading Comprehension: A Process Approach
Developing Strategic Readers
Scope and Sequence: Skills and Strategies
Planning and Organizing Instruction
Selecting Instructional Materials
Evaluation

A Guide To Curriculum Planning In Reading addresses the current research and theory on reading comprehension and teacher effectiveness. The Guide emphasizes the role of teachers as decision makers who create an environment for developing strategic readers who are knowledgeable about the reading act and who:

- construct meaning from print;
- apply strategies to learn from text;
- develop an interest in reading as a life-long enjoyment.

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***Strategic teaching/strategic reading:
An inservice approach with promise***

Mary Boyd
Oregon School District
Oregon, Wisconsin
Margaret Wilsman
Wisconsin Public Television and Radio Networks
Madison, Wisconsin

The Problem of Providing Inservice at the District Level

Reading specialists often have the opportunity to attend conferences, seminars, and symposiums and listen to current researchers present suggestions for improving the teaching of reading comprehension. When attending a particularly stimulating presentation, it's easy to daydream about how nice it would be if all classroom teachers could be hearing and seeing the same presentation. Inservice would be so easy, right? Unfortunately, this has seemed to be an impossibility until recently. This past semester, the Oregon district was able to bring, at no charge, the following well-known researchers in the field of reading to the district to speak to the staff about reading comprehension:

Dale Johnson
Robert Tierney
Mary Jett-Simpson
Gerald Duffy
Jill Fitzgerald

P. David Pearson
Isabel Beck
Taffy Raphael
Scott Paris
Jeanne Chall

Before you wonder too long about why Oregon, Wisconsin has suddenly become the mecca for many of the more noted reading experts, let us also indicate that they are ready and willing to come to your district too - through the video magic of the Wisconsin Public Television Network's series: *Teaching Reading Comprehension*. This new inservice instructional television series was broadcast for the first time last semester over the state's public television network. Oregon School District agreed to serve as the site for the research project done to evaluate this series. We hope that what follows will give other school districts ideas about how staff can be inserviced on many of the concepts presented in the new state (DPI) reading guide and about what

recent research says we should be doing to improve the teaching of reading comprehension.

The New Teacher-Inservice Instructional Television Series

Teaching Reading Comprehension is a new instructional television series for teacher inservice education (or preservice education) which was produced at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Teleproduction Center last year by the Wisconsin Public Television Network, with partial funding from the U.S. Department of Education. The series, which consists of fourteen, 30-minute video programs and an eight-page viewer's guide, was designed by the Network in consultation with Doris Cook, the DPI reading supervisor, in order to present to teachers the major theory behind the design of the new DPI reading curriculum guide (Cook, 1985). That theory is based on the line of reading comprehension research begun in 1975 at the Center for the Study of Reading, University of Illinois by Delores Durkin and P. David Pearson, who first pointed out that teachers assess reading comprehension, but do not provide instruction in it (Pearson & Johnson, 1978). The new guide and video series also are based on the research program begun at the Institute for Research on Teaching, Michigan State University. At the Institute, Laura Roehler and Gerry Duffy were the first to investigate the kinds of direct explanations teachers should provide to students about reading comprehension skills in order to improve students' reading comprehension abilities (Duffy, Roehler & Mason, 1984).

The *Teaching Reading Comprehension* series was developed to attain four goals which came from the new reading comprehension research:

1. To update teachers on current research and views about reading comprehension instruction.
2. To introduce to teachers a set of reading comprehension strategies which students should master to become monitors of their own reading comprehension.
3. To provide guidelines and directions for instructional change in reading instruction.
4. To encourage teachers to consider themselves as decision makers with respect to developing, presenting, and assessing reading comprehension lessons.

Cohosts for the series are Dr. Mary Jett-Simpson, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, who also wrote the viewer's guide for the series, and Dr. Sandra Dahl, Madison. They also served as content consultants for the development of the program in the series. Each program features at least one nationally recognized reading researcher and educator. Those experts featured include, in addition to those experts mentioned above:

Richard Allington
Kathryn Au
Donald Graves
MaryAnne Hall
Jane Hansen
Jane Osborn

Lenore Ringler
Trinka Smith-Burke
Dorothy Stickland
Paul Wilson
Peter Winograd

These experts present the findings of their own research which has suggested new approaches to teaching reading comprehension. Their theoretical presentations are followed in the video programs by teachers demonstrating the new comprehension approaches with their students. The video programs present at least two classroom examples of each new approach. These classroom segments were shot in five Wisconsin elementary schools: Garland School, Milwaukee; Meadowbrook, Hillcrest, and Whittier Schools, Waukesha; and Leopold School, Madison.

The major topics of the programs include:
The Nature of Reading Comprehension Instruction Today
The Current View of Reading Comprehension
The Reading-Writing Relationship
Semantic Mapping
Word Meaning
Integrating Word Analysis
Inference
Story Mapping
Developing Active Constructive Readers within the Basal Reader Structure
Becoming Strategic Readers -- Strategic Teacher.

For each program in the series there is an eight-page section in the viewer's guide that provides a summary of the program and program objective. Two kinds of suggested classroom activities are also included, one set for classroom teachers and another set for inservice facilitators. Finally, several journal articles are listed in the bibliography after each program's section.

How Oregon Used the Series to Solve District Inservice Problems

Oregon's opportunity to use this new inservice television series to provide district reading-inservice education came about because of the policy of the Wisconsin Public Television Network to conduct formative evaluation on the first program produced in a new instructional television series, as well as summative evaluation of the entire series. Oregon agreed to help evaluate the first program in the series, and this led eventually to the school district and Wisconsin Public Television Network working together during the past semester.

A decision was made that reading specialists and K-8 teachers were to be selected for the summative evaluation of the series even though the series was produced primarily for elementary teachers at the primary levels. This was done since the background theory is generalizable to all cases of reading comprehension instruction. The Network hoped that these evaluators would help to determine if the new video series also were appropriate to a broader audience. If so, the Network could correctly direct the series toward its appropriate audience.

The Network hoped that at least one district who helped evaluate the pilot program would also eventually help to evaluate the entire series. Oregon helped evaluate the first program, "Semantic Mapping." After previewing that first program of the series and experiencing the joint enthusiasm for the program among the principal and teachers, the reading specialist felt that if the other programs in the new video series were of equal quality, they could provide a high quality extended inservice program, that had the potential to reach a relatively large number of staff members. A discussion with the district administration established administration support for the idea of an inservice course on teaching reading comprehension. There also was agreement that Oregon would serve as a site for the summative evaluation of the entire television series. This is how the Oregon school district had an opportunity to provide a quality inservice experience to twenty-four staff members who represent K-8 classrooms as well as library services in the middle school (grades 4-6). The following steps in the planning for the course took place in Spring, 1985.

Initial Thinking and Planning for the New Inservice Course

First, the two of us, district reading specialist and Wisconsin Public Television Network instructional-television researcher, met to explore ideas for the design of a course for Oregon teachers. During that discussion, we discovered that both of our separate interests could be accommodated in a common plan. For the evaluation, teachers from a wide span of grades were desirable and the district interest survey showed that teachers from a wide span of grades, K-8, were interested in taking a reading comprehension course.

Major Considerations

One of the major obstacles to providing high quality inservice opportunities to staff has been providing inservice which meets the varying needs of teachers who work within a wide span of grade levels. Another obstacle has been providing inservice for an extended period of time, which allows adequate time for learning new theory and practices from researchers, as well as for discussion and interaction among

teachers taking the course. For the evaluation's purposes we needed class sessions which were long enough to permit monitored, group viewing of the programs, as well as follow-up discussion, activities, and evaluation. The Network proposed having the course meet from September through April, with a break during December. The present structure for awarding district credits did not accommodate such an arrangement, so we decided on a one semester course. To permit teachers adequate time for examining each new approach to teaching reading comprehension, we decided to evaluate only three quarters of the programs in the series. This decision seemed valid since some of the teachers who had signed up for the course were already familiar with a few of the strategies presented in the series. We selected to use only those programs which presented approaches that were not topics of previous inservice workshops in the district.

Also, evaluating only three-quarters of the programs would permit us to devote more class time to the topics in Program Fourteen: "Becoming a Strategic Reader -- Strategic Teacher." That program focuses in the conditions which must be present in a district for long-term and real changes to occur in a reading program. We wanted to supplement Program Fourteen with the ideas suggested by Joyce (1985) and Servatis and Young (1985) regarding the importance of preparing teachers to coach teachers. We were jointly concerned about evaluating whether the course would overcome the toughest obstacle to effective inservice programs: providing inservice which results in carryover into the classroom and results in real change in teachers' ideas about their reading programs. These two authors mentioned above document that long-term change requires setting up a procedure and spirit that provides teachers with continued support from fellow teachers during the months following the inservice course. We decided to add the two above readings to the bibliography for Program Fourteen in the series and to devote at least part of two class sessions to discussing the support system which Oregon's teachers need to develop with one another in order to make their changes long-lasting and workable. We also discussed evaluating the effectiveness of the inservice course through interviews with the teachers -- one year later, to determine how the course contributed to long-term changes in their reading programs. No decisions were made on this latter point.

Participating in the evaluation of the series provided a way to overcome another long-standing obstacle -- providing inservice when the staff perceives a need for it and when impending changes like those in the new DPI reading guide dictate a need. Teachers needed to be informed regarding the changes suggested in that guide, so we decided to spend at least part of one class period talking about how the approaches presented in the series matched the changes suggested in the new state reading guide.

From the perspective of providing high quality inservice experiences to the staff, we felt that a course using already-developed video tapes would also overcome two other major obstacles which have presented themselves over the years:

Inservice which provides up-to-date, well-organized information, yet permits a specialist to carry out other district duties which prevent one from expending large blocks of time in the development of the inservice activities.

Inservice which provides teachers with demonstrations with students about how theoretical knowledge and its suggested applications work in the classroom.

Preplanning: Step one was to determine whether there was enough interest for such a course. This was done by distributing an interest survey which included a tentative course description to K-8 staff. It was suggested that they contact a person on staff who had viewed the "Semantic Mapping" video tape during the formative evaluation for an objective opinion about its potential usefulness in a course. In addition, options for credit were presented to see whether staff were primarily interested in district or university credit. Twenty-six people, representing K-8 from all elementary buildings in the district, initially expressed an interest; using that information we constructed a course design.

Because staff had indicated a desire for university credit, we approached the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater with the tentative course design and asked if they would consider offering it for credit as an outreach course in the Oregon district. Interaction with Dr. Joan Heimlich from Whitewater took place to be sure university course standards were met. The course was approved for two university credits with a third independent study credit option. Therefore, Oregon district staff were given the option to take the course for two or three district credits or for two or three university credits.

The Course

Format: The course involved 12 weekly sessions, 2½ hours long, which were held on Tuesdays from 3:45-6:15 p.m. The class met in the IMC of the district's rural, elementary school, since it had the largest number of teacher enrollments and had seldom been the location of a district inservice course.

The course consisted of:

1. The taped half-hour programs for the *Teaching Reading Comprehension* instructional-television series.
2. Copies of the viewer's guide for each class member.

3. Assignments of one or more reprinted articles selected from the bibliography for each program in the viewers guide.
4. Facilitators and guest presenters who discussed and supplemented the material which the class had seen on the videotape.
5. Time for staff to interact and share experiences as they tried out the strategies presented. This was not done just at the last session, which is traditional, but occurred throughout the course.

Course Planning: The most time-consuming part of the reading process involved the decision about which supplemental readings to provide -- since the list of suggested readings for each program, though of high quality, was sometimes repetitive or geared more toward the professional reading researcher rather than the classroom teacher. Because we wanted people to read and find the articles helpful, we were very selective. For each week's assigned readings, we tried to choose one article by the expert appearing in the program we were viewing that week plus another article which clarified or expanded on the focal point of the program.

Another part of the planning process involved selecting those programs which we would use and the sequence in which we would use them. We used 11 of the 14 programs and did not follow the sequence in which the programs were broadcast even though the programs in the series do have a structured sequence, that is, in the later programs the cohosts make reference to ideas and experts in earlier programs.

Oregon's experience with other television courses suggested that having a knowledgeable facilitator available to provide interaction about the content presented on the video program was essential. Because neither of us could devote a large portion of our week to class preparation for this course, several people were hired to help facilitate.

As district reading specialist, Mary Boyd was always present at the class sessions, was facilitator at three sessions, and handled administrative details for one school district. As the researcher, Marge Wilsman facilitated three sessions and provided the instruments used as pretests, post-tests, and evaluations of particular programs. Dr. Heimlich facilitated one session and oversaw the work of those students taking the course for graduate credit. In addition, four persons -- Judy Casey, Director of Reading for Waukesha Schools; Nancy Runkel, Reading Specialist for Waukesha Schools; Dr. Mary Jett-Simpson, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; and Dr. Adelaide Bingham, Beloit College -- were hired to facilitate one session each. Doris Cook, Reading Supervisor from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, was a guest speaker at the session which dealt with the match between the *Teaching Reading Comprehension* series and the new state curriculum guide in reading.

Translating Oregon's Experience to Your District

We feel that Oregon's experience need not be unique, that by adopting the ideas presented here to its circumstances and needs, any school district can make use of the *Teaching Reading Comprehension* videotape series to provide useful inservice experiences. Regardless of where a district is located in the state, it has access to several groups of persons who can help it use the series to inservice the district's staff. One group is the Wisconsin Public Television Network Liaisons, called Regional Service Unit Directors (or RSU's), who each serve a channel area for public television, and can be reached through their nearest CESA office. For no charge to member schools, they provide services which include helping educators make the most effective use of broadcast instructional television series. These persons are: Bobbie Kuchta, CESA 11, Channels 28 and 20; Cathie Johnson, CESA 2, Channel 21; Carole Siegel, CESA 1, Channels 36 and Milwaukee ITFS Channel 9; Eileen Littig, CESA 7, Channels 38, 20, and Translator 55; Nancy Hoene, CESA 12, Channels 36 and 8; and Judith Aakre, CESA 4, Channel 31. They can provide information, for example, on how to tape the video programs as they are broadcast next year and how to order the viewer's guide.

Districts also have access to university level personnel who offer outreach courses for university credit. Districts could approach one or both of these persons (RSU's or University staff) about using the series to inservice its district's staff. A few districts did use these services this past semester to make use of the reading comprehension videotape series for inservice purposes.

For example, in the Channel 28 area, Bobbie Kuchta helped Pat Solfest from the Altoona School District and Inez Campbell from the Elkmound District, who wanted to use the series to provide inservice to their district's teachers. Dr. Roger Quealy from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire first agreed to provide an outreach course for the Altoona District, and later he made a similar agreement with Elkmound. Bobbie Kuchta had alerted the district media coordinators, through her *NIBS* newsletter, to tape the *Teaching Reading Comprehension* programs as they were aired during last semester. She also told the districts' reading specialists about the viewer's guide so they could order copies for each teacher. Bobbie Kuchta provided the districts with copies of the journal articles which were the readings used for each program by the Orgeon participants. She also helped with the course arrangements which were different at each location. In Altoona, for example, the teachers watched the television programs on their own as they were broadcast over Channel 28 each Monday afternoon at 3:30. They next day they met for a half hour in the elementary IMC to discuss the program. They then wrote a lesson plan and tried the strategy presented in the program that week. The

teachers taking the class also shared one strategy with each of their units on the December elementary school inservice day. They showed a videotape and shared what they had done to implement the strategy.

Another approach a district might take to use this series to inservice staff is to work with that district's administration to design a course such as the one held in Oregon, Wisconsin, this past semester and have staff receive district or DPI approved CEU credits. Do not allow the lack of large numbers of reading specialists in your district to deter you. If you want organizational help, and it is helpful to work with someone else, you might try contacting a reading specialist in a neighboring district. By working together, you may be able to offer a course for your combined districts or offer it one semester in one district and the next semester in the other districts. Also, remember there are active reading councils in most parts of the state. Individuals from those councils may be willing to help facilitate sessions in your district for a fee or for reciprocal help in their own district. In fact, local reading councils may want to develop a list of people in their area who are willing and competent to serve as a facilitator on one of the topics covered by the reading comprehension video programs. University personnel may be willing to consult in this capacity for your district. Finally, the University of Wisconsin Extension is currently investigating using the series next year as part of an adult credit television course. The Regional Service Directors will have information on this course if it materializes.

Dr. Carol Dana, Marquette University, is an example of a university contact person who has helped with the evaluation of the television series this past semester. She has developed her own materials for teaching students to become strategic readers, and she has found additional ways to use the series to provide continuing education for teachers, using the programs independent of one another. For example, a teacher interested in a particular area of comprehension, and interested in story mapping, has viewed individual programs to learn about her special interest and how it can be implemented into the classroom. This was done within the context of an independent study or graduate course this teacher was taking with Dr. Dana.

Results and Conclusions

Course Components: From the perspective of evaluating the series, it seemed important to determine how the teachers responded to each one of the course components: the TV programs, viewer's guide, session leader, class discussion, readings or presentations by other teachers taking the course. The teachers considered the television programs to be more valuable than the viewer's guide or the readings. However, the facilitators or session leaders rated these last two components as highly valuable. The teachers commented that while the

two and a half hour weekly session was not long enough to permit adequate discussion of the readings, they were still glad to have them for future reference. Originally, we planned to begin each class by discussing the week's readings, which were distributed the week prior to the class in which the discussion would take place. Due to lack of time, we did not have these discussions, and teachers rated the readings as the one part of the course they could do without or probably would benefit from more in the future.

Teachers thought that a main advantage of the course was the constant facilitators: the reading specialist and researcher who were present at all the sessions, along with the four experts who came in for single sessions. These persons provided a resource for discussing points in the television programs. Teachers felt that the main disadvantage of the video programs was not being able to discuss some points with the experts. The main advantage of the programs, however, according to the teachers, was that they presented a multitude of ideas in a short amount of time.

Class discussions seemed to be important for several reasons. The teachers appreciated the facilitators' and guest experts' expansion on the ideas and examples presented in the video program. At the beginning of the course we failed to point out to teachers that the viewer's guide has a similar intended use: to provide activities which permit teachers to "discuss to themselves" the ideas presented in the program in order to expand on them. The class discussion also served another purpose. The primary grade teachers appreciated hearing the seventh and eighth grade teachers discuss the importance of primary grade student outcomes. The teachers realized that collectively, K-8, there is a district reading program which they each can support. Teachers said that they don't have enough opportunities, across such wide grade levels, to discuss reading. Also through the class discussion, teachers heard grade-level translations of the strategies. The terminology was one part of the strategies which the teachers changed. For example, for the story-mapping strategy presented in Program Nine, the terms "characters," "setting," and "goal" were changed by the kindergarten and first-grade teachers to "who," "where," "when," and "what."

Series Goals: One of the unique outcomes of the course was the enthusiasm with which the teachers discussed their learning about reading comprehension research. In the words of one teacher: "I liked having the researchers on TV; this made me feel that the suggested strategies were scientific, based on research, not just someone's bright idea." Another teacher's comment, "Gave me many ideas with important theories to back them up," was expressed by other teachers who also said that they appreciated the format used in the video series: to present a new reading-instruction approach by first interviewing the expert(s) who conducted the research that lead to the new strategy.

Teachers varied in their learning about the different strategies: the second goal of the series. For example, story mapping, semantic mapping, and questioning were the three strategies teachers learned most about and felt most committed to continue using. Only two teachers indicated a realization that they must provide instruction in all of the strategies in order to develop strategic readers. All of the participants expressed enthusiasm for continued use of the reading strategies presented in the television programs and commitment to their importance in reading. However, the teachers who had only the half-hour class in Altoona responded somewhat differently. They commented that they felt overwhelmed with all the information and would like more time to think about the programs and the readings. One half hour was not sufficient to discuss the program, nor to clarify ideas. The teachers were, however, positive about their course and appreciated the exposure to new ideas which the course gave them, even if they could not use all the ideas right away.

The real learning, for most teachers, took place when they tried out the strategies, rather than when they watched the program or discussed it. Our over-riding conclusion is that this type of learning requires time. For example, the teachers in the Oregon course, when responding to the question: of what they would change about the course said that the next time, the course should be offered over a longer period of time. After hearing the in-class reports of how teachers used the approach in the previous week's video program with their students, the rest of the class often wanted to try out what they had just heard. Each week, however, a new approach was presented, and rather than try to implement the approach from the previous week, the teachers felt obligated to implement the new approach. In other words, a new approach a week is too much. Based on information collected in follow-up interviews with more than half of the teachers, it appears that teachers need to accomplish a high level of proficiency in teaching each strategy before they begin to think in terms of students' mastery of that strategy for self-monitoring of their own reading comprehension. Overall, by the end of the course, teachers were still viewing the strategies in terms of new instructional approaches rather than in terms of new student outcomes. Three teachers suggested that the course should have lasted for the entire school year so they could have had more time to learn about and practice using each strategy. Two other teachers said they would have liked at least two weeks to try out each strategy. Perhaps this comment is an indirect way of indicating that teachers do realize the importance of teaching all the strategies.

Not all of the participants could identify ways in which the programs provided guidelines for overall instructional change: the third goal. There were, however, a few outstanding positive examples. As

one teacher said: "The course really turned my reading class around; wish I had more time to develop my curriculum based on this course." Several teachers were able to use story mapping, semantic mapping, and questioning as a framework to guide students' reading and writing, as well as to improve students' self-confidence in their writing skills. The seventh grade teacher used these strategies to guide geography instruction. At the beginning of the course, the kindergarten and first-grade teachers were skeptical about the usefulness of the strategies, but during the course they saw a way to use the strategies to develop listening skills during storytime, as well as prereading abilities, like oral story-telling skills.

While we did not suggest that the new approaches should replace the activities in the basal reading program, we did expect that the teachers would become more confident decision-makers with respect to which basal reading activities to include and which to omit: the fourth series goal. One teacher's comment reflects some accomplishment of this goal: "I felt the course really did ask me to evaluate my methods and take charge of the strategies used in my class." As other teachers told about ways they used the strategies in their classes, they mentioned that they decided to use a particular strategy in place of the activity suggested in the basal reader. They said that before taking this course they would not have considered deleting or substituting any of the basal reader activities, but now they feel they can justifiably do so. Not all teachers expressed these outcomes, however. One teacher said that the course left him with an unorganized framework for thinking about reading instruction. This outcome, while disturbing to some persons, is an essential and positive step in the direction towards change. Real change, that is changes in frameworks, first involves breaking into the existing framework and causing disarray. This is not something many teachers accomplish. That is, many teachers merely add new approaches and still use them within their old theoretical framework.

Recommendations

While Teaching Reading Comprehension will not help you inservice all aspects of reading instruction, it can be used effectively to accomplish the following kinds of objectives.

Inservice a diverse group of staff members. Based on our project, we can recommend that the instructional-television series be used with reading teachers and librarians grades K-8, Chapter 1 teachers, and other content teachers (One music teacher was in the class.) Remember though, that initially the entire group may not understand how the strategies apply to their work. Tell them to be patient.

Develop a long-range view for curriculum change in the district's reading program and perhaps the language arts program, as well. When series attention is paid to the ideas and strategies suggested in each video program, teachers begin to realize that the approaches they are learning can lead to major shifts in their programs. Provide enough time and opportunity for teachers to consider real change in their curriculum frameworks, rather than merely thinking about new techniques they can add to their teaching repertoire.

Present current research about teaching reading comprehension. Do not shy away from presenting theory and theoretical ideas. Despite the large amount of theory presented by the experts in each program as well as that which is described in the assigned journal articles, not one teacher complained that the course was too theoretical. Perhaps this happened because the television programs not only allowed teachers to hear many research findings but also presented classes in action using these findings. Perhaps this happened because our class sessions were long enough to permit teachers to share, each week, their own attempts to use the strategy suggested in the previous week's program. Remember to allow adequate time, on a regular basis, for teachers to discuss with others their own successful trials and problems.

Present information on the strategic reader which is the philosophical focus of the new DPI reading curriculum guide. Remember that your district's staff, like the teachers in our course, are not familiar with the concepts of the strategic reader or the strategic teacher. While the post-test results indicate that the inservice course was not 100 percent successful in developing teachers' understandings, every participant expanded his/her understandings in some way. Follow-up interviews with the teachers indicate that they must first learn the behaviors and thinking of the strategic teacher before they can concentrate on those of the strategic reader. Expect that it will take time for your district's staff to understand and implement the ideas in the new DPI reading guide, and that you will need to make some long-term inservice commitments to prepare teachers to implement the new guide.

Provide helpful background to teachers who are contemplating use of *Storylords*, a student instructional-television and computer series which attempts to teach students to be more independent, strategic readers. Teachers in your district may or may not have heard about *Storylords*. When they do hear about it, they may need help in deciding which grade(s) should use *Storylords*. All third and fourth grade teachers enrolled in the course expressed an interest in using the *Storylords* series during second semester. Other teachers would also like to use the series, such as the Chapter One teacher who deals with the students who read below grade level. The Oregon teachers are

meeting this semester to plan how to implement *Storylords*. Your teachers may appreciate developing a plan for your district's implementation of *Storylords*.

Summary

Thus, with a reasonable expenditure of reading specialist time, with administrative cooperation, and with the involvement of a minimum number of district reading personnel, any school district can provide a worthwhile inservice experience for its staff about teaching reading comprehension. Based on the positive evaluation of course participants in the Oregon district, other Wisconsin districts, using the *Teaching Reading Comprehension* video series as a focus, can:

1. Upgrade teacher background on current reading comprehension research.
2. Inservice staff about most of the major theories behind the design of the new DPI reading guide.

The series can do this efficiently and effectively because it permits teachers to view a wide range of experts and hear many viewpoints about new and alternative approaches to teaching reading as they are highlighted in the current reading literature. Teachers can also see a visual charting of the ideas presented and "go" into classrooms where the new approaches are being used.

Mary Boyd is the reading specialist in the Oregon, Wisconsin, schools.

Dr. Margaret Wilsman is manager of Research and Evaluation for the Wisconsin Public Television and Radio Networks.

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*Improving reading instruction in the classroom:
A university course format for staff development*

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Typically, staff development activities for inservice teachers are presumed to lie within the province of local school districts. University course work is perceived as a necessary prerequisite for the licensing of teachers and for the completion of advanced certification in a special area or for a graduate degree. Local school districts, however, usually turn to their own resources or employ an outside specialist to improve classroom instruction according to district specifications. University courses are often judged as being too theoretical, too research-oriented, too impractical, or too removed from the needs of a particular district to be effective in helping teachers improve their classroom instruction.

What follows is a description of a university reading methods course designed to encourage and help classroom teachers improve their instructional reading programs. The course was designed according to recent research findings regarding the characteristics of effective staff development programs. The course was also designed to realize the potential of action research for the improvement of teachers' classroom behavior. Action research was defined according to Harris and Hodges (1981, p. 6) as "field research or study designed for direct application to behavior or to a situation, as school learning programs."

Students

Enrollment in the course is limited to teachers who are currently responsible for the teaching of reading, in regular classrooms or in settings for remedial instruction. All enrolled teachers must have access to students on a daily basis and freedom to make curriculum modifications with the approval of their administrators, an important factor in staff development (Berman & Molanghlin, 1978; Lieberman & Miller, 1981). Enrollment is limited to twenty-five students. The course, as it has been offered by the University of Wisconsin-Madison, may be taken for three graduate credits, or teachers may

enroll as "special" students for a reduced fee. Credits taken as a special student do not apply toward a graduate degree.

To this time the majority of the teachers have enrolled as special students rather than for graduate credit. Their principal motivations for enrolling in the course are their desire to improve their teaching and their need to meet district or state requirements for continuing education. The range of years of teaching experience in the course all four times it has been offered has been large.

Course Requirements

The requirements for the course are the following:

1. Each teacher, with assistance from the instructor, identifies components or a component of his or her classroom reading program that need(s) improvement. Nixon (1981) says, "The case for action research may be stated briefly. By investigating and reflecting upon their own practice teachers may increase their understanding of the classroom."
2. Each teacher writes an improvement plan which includes student behaviors or classroom conditions to be improved, the means for affecting the desired improvement, and the observations that will be made to evaluate the effectiveness of the improvement. Kemmis and McTaggart (1982, p. 6) point out that, "a distinctive feature of action research is that those affected by planned changes have the primary responsibility for deciding on courses of action which seem likely to lead to improvement, and for evaluating the results of strategies tried out in practice." Mohlman, Coladarci, and Gage (1982) found that the more highly implemented teaching practices resulting from staff development programs were perceived by the teachers as specific, philosophically acceptable, and worth the effort."
3. Each teacher participates in a small group formed to provide guidance to group members in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the improvement plan. Bentzen (1974) found that teachers were more inclined to make changes in their instructional programs when they worked in small groups with group problem-solving activities. A similar finding was reported by Wood, Thompson, and Russell (1980). Group size is kept small, eight or fewer teachers, in keeping with the finding of Menlo and Gill (1982) that small groups are better than large for encouraging discussion.
4. Each teacher reads at least one article a week in recent professional publications, preferably relevant to his or her improvement plan. A collection of journals is made available, and

teachers share their reading within their study groups. This sharing in small groups is a relaxing, non-threatening activity that helps set a tone of support and trust in keeping with the finding of Wood, Thompson, and Russell (1981) that staff development programs are most effective when they are set in such an atmosphere.

5. At the conclusion of the course, each teacher reports orally to the entire class on his or her progress. Teachers whose projects are not completed are advised to report on their progress to date and tell their plans for finishing their projects.
6. Each teacher writes a paper describing the work he or she has done for the course. The paper must:
 - a) be titled
 - b) present the rationale for the improvement plan with references to related literature
 - c) contain the improvement plan
 - d) describe the results of the implementation of the improvement plan.

First Class Meeting

At the first class meeting the purposes and requirements for the course are explained, and an overview of the various components of a reading curriculum (e.g., teaching word identification strategies, teaching vocabulary development, teaching comprehension skills, teaching reading as a leisure-time activity, developing positive attitudes toward reading) is given. The instructor also demonstrates a teaching strategy (i.e., using the cloze technique to teach context clue analysis). Volunteers are then asked to "experiment" with the strategy with their own students and report their findings at the next meeting. Little (1981) found that staff development efforts were most likely to be successful where experimentation and collegiality were fostered.

Then the teachers are assigned to complete the needs assessment instrument for the next class meeting (Figure 1). Their responses to the various items on the handout are discussed the following meeting and are used to form study groups for students with similar interests. They are also used to determine the content for lectures, demonstrations, and role playing at subsequent meetings.

Format of Subsequent Class Meetings

Class meetings are held weekly. Several researchers have reported the advisability of scheduling staff development meetings at least one week apart (Stallings, Needels & Stayrook, 1978; Anderson, Evertson & Brophy, 1979; Berman & McLaughlin, 1978). They meet after school for approximately 150 minutes. The meetings are often

Figure 1
NEEDS ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

Indicate how satisfied you are with how you do each of the following.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Improvement Desired
1. Teach word identification skills			
2. Develop vocabulary			
3. Teach oral reading fluency			
4. Teach silent reading comprehension (literal)			
5. Teach silent reading comprehension (higher level)			
6. Teach study and/or research skills			
7. Teach content area reading skills			
8. Develop positive attitudes toward reading			
9. Assess skills needs			
10. Evaluate progress			
11. Ability-group			
12. Provide curriculum alternatives for different ability groups			
13. Maintain a balanced program			
14. Use basal materials			
15. Supplement basal materials			
16. Prepare students for selections			
17. Conduct post-reading discussions			
18. Involve parents			
19. Report to parents			
20. Teach readiness skills			
21. Other			

Select one of the areas for which you selected "Improvement Desired" and list the specific observations that prompted you to make that judgement.

shortened as the teachers spend increasing amounts of out-of-class time producing instructional materials, planning and implementing new teaching strategies, and conferring with their district reading specialists and principals.

The first thirty minutes or so of each meeting is devoted to reporting time for teachers who volunteered to experiment with the teaching

strategy that was demonstrated the previous meeting. A new strategy is then demonstrated, and volunteers to experiment with the new strategy are selected.

A lecture/discussion/demonstration is then given with the focus on some topic of concern to one or more of the study groups. For example, the lecture topic might be "Using Mental Imagery Training to Improve Reading Comprehension." An attempt is made to incorporate theory, research, and practical application in these segments of the class.

The teachers are then given an opportunity to meet in their study groups to help each other with their "Reading Program Improvement Plans," which are described in the following subsection.

Reading Program Improvement Plan

Every teacher in the class is required to submit a Reading Program Improvement Plan at the end of the sixth week of class. Each plan must include the following:

1. **Description of the Target Population:** Describe the students in terms of academic achievement, motivation, group placement, or any other variables that are relevant to your improvement plan (e.g., six underachieving, poorly motivated sixth graders with weak comprehension skills development).
2. **Student Behaviors or Classroom Conditions to be Improved:** Describe the student behaviors or classroom conditions you hope to improve (e.g., the comprehension of short stories at the literal and inferential levels).
3. **Description of the Classroom Environment:** Describe the classroom in terms of organization, physical facilities, or any other variables relevant to your improvement plan (e.g., classroom library, moveable furniture to facilitate small-group discussion).
4. **Resources Available:** Describe any resources, people or materials, available to you for the implementation of your improvement plan (e.g., a collection of high-interest, easy-to-read paperbacks).
5. **Improvement Plan:** Describe how you will utilize resources and implement instructional methods or strategies for the desired improvement (e.g., daily periods of silent reading followed by small-group discussion of material).
6. **Evaluation of the Improvement Plan:** Describe any formal or informal measures or observations you will make to evaluate your plan in terms of student behavior (e.g., students' ability to relate what they read in small groups, administration of

periodic teacher-made comprehension tests on the books students are reading).

The finished plans are presented and discussed in the small groups and submitted to the instructor for comments and a grade. They are also used for reference in subsequent small group discussions regarding progress with the implementation of the plan.

The Course Paper

As indicated in the list of course requirements, all teachers must write a paper that describes the course-connected work they did in their classrooms, their rationale for what they did, and the effects of their work on their students' behavior. The paper is intended to help teachers see the interrelationship of research, theory, and practical application. It is also intended to serve as a guide for other curriculum improvement efforts they might make after the class is concluded.

The Final Oral Reports

The final two class meetings are devoted to oral presentations by each teacher to the entire class. Presentations are limited to fifteen minutes and are timed. Teachers are encouraged to use handouts, visual aids, audio tapes, and any other instructional device to explain what they did to improve their classroom reading programs and the effects of what they did on their students' reading growth. Each teacher's presentation is graded by the instructor and is the last of the three grades used to determine the final grade for the course with some consideration given to participation in the weekly class meetings.

Evaluation of the Course

At this writing, "Improving Reading Instruction in the Classroom" has been taught seven times with consistently high ratings from the teachers who were enrolled. Typical evaluation comments have been "very practical," "gave me the encouragement I needed to make some needed improvements in my teaching," "a very worthwhile course," "well planned -- nice variety of activities -- good opportunities for sharing among professionals."

Course enrollments have averaged about twenty teachers with a wide range of teaching experience. As stated earlier, some teachers take the course to satisfy state requirements or to keep their teaching license current; others take the course for salary schedule advancement; some want to apply the course to their work toward a Master's degree, and still others take the course for no reason other than to improve their teaching.

The course is becoming a popular offering for the University "outreach" program. After first offering the course on campus, the

course has been given in off-campus locations at the request of school districts that can assure the university of a suitable enrollment. The format is appealing to district administrators because what the teachers learn in class is transported into their classrooms.

All in all, the format of the course is appealing to teachers, their administrators, and the instructors who have taught the course. Although this particular course is titled, "Improving Reading Instruction....," the course format is applicable to the improvement of writing, mathematics, science, or other curriculum areas.

Richard J. Smith is author of five reading methods textbooks, numerous articles, and instructional materials for students. He is also a recipient of a University of Wisconsin Distinguished Teaching Award.

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CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

The *Wisconsin State Reading Association Journal* is seeking articles that are aimed at improving the quality of reading instruction. Each issue is developed around a predetermined theme; however, articles not related to the theme but deserving publication are encouraged. Each theme is selected to be wide enough in scope to allow for many approaches and kinds of articles. The *WSRA Journal* especially encourages the submission of descriptions of research, poetry, practical papers, etc.

Themes and deadlines for 1986-1987 are:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Volume 31, Number 1 | Theme: The Strategic Reader
Deadline: July 1, 1986 |
| Volume 31, Number 2 | Theme: Helping Students
Remember: Effective
Approaches to Compre-
hension Instruction
Deadline: October 1, 1986 |
| Volume 31, Number 3 | Theme: Reading and Writing
Across the Curriculum
Deadline: February 1, 1987 |
| Volume 31, Number 4 | Theme: Reading for All Ages:
Perspectives on Emergent
Reading and Adult
Literacy
Deadline: May 1, 1987 |

Submissions for these issues should be sent to:

James Devine, Editor
WSRA Journal
2620 Richardson Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53711

Refer to page 102 for publication policy and guidelines.

*New perspectives in effecting change:
Using newsletters to inservice content teachers*

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In its synthesis of the research and current knowledge in reading education, *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading* (1985) places a major emphasis on the continuing professional development of teachers in reading. The report notes that the most successful opportunities for introducing new ideas about teaching reading comes when a consultant is able to work with teachers on a number of occasions over time. The report concludes that "renewed attention should be given to the professional growth of veteran teachers so that they can continue to approach teaching with zest and can have access to new knowledge that will allow them to improve their teaching" (p. 111).

The reading specialist is in an excellent position to realize this goal of keeping teachers appraised of what is new in reading instruction. Such a goal represents an ongoing effort in which recent research and practice in reading is communicated to teachers and support in implementing new ideas in reading is provided. Reading specialists usually accomplish this goal through inservice programs and workshops and through individual work with identified teachers. The four high school building reading consultants in the Madison, Wisconsin Metropolitan School District have developed another facet of this process. Since the 1984-1985 school year, the Madison consultants have been writing a monthly newsletter for teachers on recent trends in reading.

Each Madison high school (East, LaFollette, Memorial, and West) has on staff a full-time reading consultant to work with teachers on reading instruction and to coordinate the secondary school reading program in each building. The four consultants meet on a monthly basis to plan and implement programs in the high schools. Past projects have included workshops for teachers in various content areas,

such as health and biology, collaboration on a new approach for working with teachers on evaluating textbooks and other instructional materials, and the sharing of information and materials relevant to secondary reading instruction. Starting with the 1984-1985 school year, the four consultants initiated a monthly newsletter, *New Perspectives: Reading Across the Curriculum*. Each issue focused on an issue or area of research pertinent to secondary level reading and was written by one of the four Madison consultants. The newsletter was distributed to all high school teachers in the Madison school system and was followed up by a ninety minute discussion session open to all interested teachers. These discussion sessions allowed teachers a chance to react to the information in the newsletters and provided them with specific instructional strategies and materials that were related to the content of each newsletter. These mini-workshops were conducted by the four reading consultants in each of the four high schools to insure that this opportunity was accessible to as many high school teachers as possible. Teachers participating in these sessions shared ideas and materials and received inservice credit for trying out some of the new ideas in their classrooms. The newsletters and workshops were well-received by teachers and have continued during the 1985-1986 school year.

The following *New Perspectives* newsletters were distributed to high school teachers during the 1984-1985 school year. They represent a synthesis of research and information about reading instruction. They were written to provide content teachers with an insight as to what is recent in thinking about reading and address the implications this thinking has for classroom instruction. A number of sources and materials were instrumental in guiding our thinking on the issues and topics of these newsletters. Most important were the materials developed by Santa for the *Content Reading in Secondary Schools* (CRISS) project in Kalispell, Montana. Other influential sources included *Secondary School Reading: What Research Reveals for Classroom Practice*, edited by Berger and Robinson; *Learning to Read in American Schools: Basal Readers and Content Texts*, edited by Anderson, Osborn, and Tierney; and *Content Reading in Secondary Schools*, also by Santa.

New Perspectives No. 1: Introduction

Over ten years have passed since most Madison high school teachers have taken the district Negotiated Reading Inservice. Since then many practical ideas have been found to help students learn from reading. Teachers complain that students lack the skills or motivation to do the reading necessary to understand the content of their courses. Recently a number of practical teaching strategies have been developed to help students in the areas of motivation, comprehension, and study skills.

This resurgence in interest in the secondary school has come about because of concerns about graduation standards, declining test scores, and national reports.

This year the four Madison high school reading consultants will share some of the successful new ideas about helping students learn in high school. In order to communicate these ideas with all secondary teachers this year, we have decided to write seven brief newsletters entitled *New Perspectives: Reading Across the Curriculum* which will contain practical suggestions for teaching reading. Following each of these newsletters we will hold a discussion where materials and ideas related to the topic will be shared. Participants in these discussions may sign up for one Professional Advancement Credit (PAC). Teachers interested in trying out ideas presented in the discussions may receive further PAC credit for independent study.

What is *new* about these ideas? Briefly, they are based on three premises (Santa, in print; Cook, 1986).

1. Students learn best when they have adequate *background knowledge* about a topic. The more the teacher does prior to reading to help students understand the concepts, the vocabulary, and the context, the better the students will read. We will share some good ideas for building student's background and taking advantage of students' prior knowledge.
2. Students learn best when they are *actively involved* in the reading process. Turning students from passive to active readers involves asking them to do something with their reading. Some novel suggestions for getting students more involved and more motivated with their reading will be shared.
3. Students need to learn how to become *strategic readers*. The teacher's goal is to help students move from dependence to independence in learning. Students must discover which learning strategies work best for them and when to apply them. Some interesting new ideas for helping students become strategic readers will be presented.

All high school teachers will receive the seven *New Perspectives* newsletters which will be distributed once a month on Mondays. The discussions will be held on the following Wednesdays, from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.

These topics will be discussed: (1) Considerate and Inconsiderate Text; (2) Prereading Activities; (3) Active Learning; (4) Strategic Learning; (5) Understanding Ideas; (6) Remembering Ideas; (7) Responding to Ideas. For a more complete syllabus see your building reading

consultant. You may choose to sign up for the discussion sessions as a PAC course, or join us on any topic that interests you during the year.

New Perspectives No. 2: Considerate and Inconsiderate Textbooks

The textbook, in spite of all other educational media available today, is still the cornerstone of classroom teaching. The job of the textbook is to further the understanding and the learning of a subject. The popular theory of learning these days is called *schema theory* (Armbruster, 1984). With textbooks it works this way. Readers bring to the textbook their own knowledge of the subject. Their background is called "schema" and is the basis for how well readers can comprehend and remember what they read. A broad background of organized knowledge means the reader can easily integrate new information into his/her schema. Little background with little or no organization means the reader will have to work hard to organize, integrate, and comprehend what is read. This explains why teachers find their textbooks easy to read and students find them "tough." Therefore a textbook that helps the student learn is a "considerate" textbook and one that doesn't accommodate the learner is "inconsiderate."

Here in Madison, teachers have freedom to select their own textbooks. Accompanying this freedom of choice is a sophisticated packet of Program Material Selection exercises that must be completed by Madison teachers before textbooks can be ordered. The PMS packet demands many hours of work and this is its worst feature because teachers tend to regard it as an obstacle. Its best feature is that it does work as an educating and sensitizing tool. Textbooks will only be as good as teachers demand they be.

The purpose of this newsletter is not to discuss what is already contained in the PMS packet but to expand the expertise that teachers already bring to their textbook selection and use. The more we know about what makes textbooks good tools, the better choices we'll make when we purchase. The more insight we gain into deficiencies of texts, the better we will be able to compensate for those deficiencies in the classroom. This newsletter will review briefly some of the current research on what makes textbooks successful learning tools or what makes a textbook *considerate* rather than *inconsiderate* of the learner.

Bonnie Armbruster and Thomas Anderson (1984) working at the Center for the Study of Reading at the University of Illinois are compiling research on what they consider the most important textbook characteristic for learning. They call this characteristic *textual coherence*. According to the *American Heritage Dictionary* "coherence" means "the quality or state of logical or orderly relationship of parts; consistency; congruity."

Global Coherence. According to Armbruster and Anderson (1984), a textbook has two kinds of coherence, global and local. Global coherence refers to the overall organization of the text. Different high school subjects have different structures or types of global coherence in their texts. Some common text structures as identified by Armbruster (1984) are: (1) simple listing; (2) comparison/contrast; (3) temporal sequence; (4) cause/effect; (5) problem/solution.

As reading consultants we have worked with many teachers on textbook selection. It is mysterious how quickly teachers can select textbooks they want to consider for use in their classrooms. They see something in the text an "outsider" can't see. This mysterious something is probably the text's global coherence. If a book's global coherence, or overall structure, or organization matches the teacher's cognitive schema, then it is a "match." The teacher sees the text as a useful tool.

Following through with Armbruster and Anderson's (1984) theory, the text has to help the student see the organization, too, because the student doesn't have the background that the teacher has. Research consistently supports the belief that the more the reader understands the overall organization of the text, the greater the chances he/she will learn from reading. The author can signal global structure in a number of ways: (1) explicit statements regarding the organization; (2) advanced organizers or introductory chapter statements; (3) summaries; (4) words or phrases that identify important information; (5) or clues in print like italics or boldface. Armbruster (1984) reviews the research and then flatly states, "The better organized the text and the more apparent the structure to the reader, the higher the probability that the reader will learn from reading." (205) Therefore teachers should critically evaluate how "considerate" the text is in highlighting and teaching its organization and structure to the student.

Local Coherence. The other kind of coherence in textbooks is local coherence or the style of writing used by the author to tie phrases, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs together. It is exactly this local coherence, this smooth flow of language, easy to understand, pleasant to read, that has been hacked to pieces by publishers desiring to "dummy down" their texts to satisfy lower readability formula levels (Davison, 1984).

Following are some local coherence items as identified by Armbruster (1984): (1) clarity of reference - how evident a pronoun's link to a previously mentioned noun; (2) substitution - the replacement of a word or words for a previously mentioned noun phrase, verb phrase, or clause; (3) conjunctions - the connectives that join one statement with another; (4) causal connectives - the explicit statement of relationships between ideas; (5) order of presentation - sequence and consistency both important to learning.

When these kinds of linguistic devices are missing from a text, it is not always apparent to the teacher. The teacher has a vast background of information on which to draw to fill in gaps and infer meaning when relationships aren't clear. The student, however, does not have this background and is likely to learn little from reading a textbook without local coherence.

This newsletter has discussed Armbruster and Anderson's concept of "textual coherence" as an essential characteristic of textbooks that work to help students learn. It is because teachers know their subject so well that they can miss the fact a text does not offer students blueprints for understanding global coherence and the verbal mortar of local coherence that hold information and ideas together. It is important for teachers to be aware of coherence when purchasing a new textbook and when using their textbook in the classroom.

Students can be taught to examine their own textbooks and monitor their own reading. For more ideas about how to teach students to deal with their textbooks, join us for the discussion session.

New Perspectives No. 3: Frontloading

"Make sure your students are adequately prepared for a learning task before they undertake it. Introduce them to difficult vocabulary. Develop basic concepts. Pique their interest and build their motivation to attempt the task. Direct them in setting their purpose in reading. Establish an expectation as to what will be learned. Find out what your students already know about the topic, and what they don't know. Relate the topic to their present level of knowledge. Then hand out the readings and turn them loose."

The above directives are all familiar "truisms" in the world of reading textbooks and other content material. They are frequently heard verities, all basics of sound teaching pedagogy. Intuitively we accept the reasonableness of such an approach to reading. It makes sense. It's logical. And therein lies the dilemma. We as teachers know what we have to do. Yet we often find it very difficult in our daily classroom lives to conscientiously follow the formula prescribed above.

FRONTLOADING is the term we're using to describe all those teaching activities accomplished before students actually read the assigned materials. It refers to all those things which must be done prior to setting our students to reading. In an International Reading Association bulletin discussing prereading activities for content teaching, David Moore, John Readence, and Robert Rickelman (1981) review recent research which underscores the necessity of appropriate prereading activities. They identify five characteristics of

students which need to be directly considered to prepare them for reading content materials. These five characteristics are (1) motivation, (2) content knowledge, (3) word knowledge, (4) learning strategies, and (5) attention.

Motivation. Providing students with the motivation to read textbook assignments is crucial in classrooms which include many students who are apathetic or frustrated readers and who regard reading as something to avoid. Studies indicate that encouraging readers to persist at their tasks leads to increased achievement. In a classroom, motivation generally involves capitalizing on students' curiosity, their inherent interest in making sense of the world around them. Asking a leading question or highlighting interesting facts or ideas helps to enhance student motivation to read what is assigned.

Content Knowledge. Content knowledge involves the students' ability to learn new information based on what they already know. The term used to describe a person's background knowledge is *schema* (Armbruster, 1984). A person's interpretation of any concept, experience, or core of knowledge is organized into a schema in long-term memory. A student will be able to comprehend a message when he/she has an adequate schema, or organized knowledge, about that topic. The ideas and events described in a reading will start to make sense when measured against what is already understood. Because people's background knowledge varies in completeness and accuracy, more than one interpretation of a text is possible. The reader's age, sex, ethnic background, religion, and occupation all may have an impact on how a text is understood, if at all. According to Richard Anderson (1984) of the Center for the Study of Reading, the "meanings of the words" alone do not add up to the message intended. "The click of comprehension occurs *only* when the reader evolves a schema that explains the whole message." (247)

Schema theory demonstrates the need to draw out the students' knowledge about a topic *before* they read about it. If students are seriously lacking in the concepts they are to read about, little will be learned and retained unless these gaps in their background knowledge are addressed by the teacher before confronting students with the reading.

Word Knowledge. Obviously, to understand a text students must know the words the text is written in. A distinction should be made between the conceptual difficulty of words and identification difficulty. Conceptual difficulty refers to the ideas represented by the word. Identification difficulty refers to features which may cause students problems figuring the word out. These include context (how the word is used and clues given to its meaning), spelling patterns (regular or irregular), and word parts (such as roots and affixes).

Learning Strategies. Learning strategies are those methods which students apply to various types of reading which will result in their understanding and remembering it. Teachers need to help students decide which strategies are most appropriate for certain portions of the text. Three strategies are most important to develop prior to having the students read: anticipating information, elaborating information, and organizing information. *Anticipating information* involves predicting what information is coming up. Students need to be helped to "think ahead" and develop expectations of what they will encounter. *Elaborating information* means to think about a topic and to expand upon it. New information is thus integrated with what students already know (their schema). *Organizing information* involves arranging information in a meaningful way so that it will become part of long-term memory. Readers who can follow the organization pattern of a text typically learn more from that text. Hence, cueing students into how a passage is structured is essential to their gaining information from it.

Attention. Because people have only a limited capacity for taking in and making sense of information, students must be able to attend to the information the most essential and worthy of learning. This means an ability to attend at both a general and a specific level. Attending at a general level refers to the familiar caveat to "Pay Attention!" and involves motivation. Attending at a specific level involves the ability to select some information to retain at the expense of other. Students need guidance in determining *what* merits attention in a reading selection. Helping set the reader's *purpose* for reading a text structures specific attention.

FREELADING OR FRONTLOADING? Why do we as teachers find it so difficult, then, to spend the time we know we should *prior* to student reading to develop motivation, content knowledge, word knowledge, learning strategies, and attention? Part of the answer to this frustration lies in student expectations themselves. It is frankly a difficult task to spend the time we want to introduce a reading. "Let's stop talking; just give us the assignment and we'll do it!" is a familiarly encountered attitude. Many students have not developed the patience for inductive teaching methods and most students expect the pay-off to come *after* they read, not before. Thus, we get an attitude that seemingly says, "Let's get on with the reading so we can talk about it and find out what it was really about."

This emphasis on postreading activities leads students to depend on their teachers as the interpreters of the material, not themselves. The process of actually reading the material becomes less necessary to get the information, so students read the material superficially and carelessly, or not at all. (Robert Pavlik of Cardinal Stritch College terms this practice "scum" reading, as opposed to "skim" or "scan"

reading.) Students come to expect to obtain what they need to know by *freeloading* off the teacher. This freeloading produces passive learners primarily dependent on the teacher for what they will know.

By gearing more of the instruction before students read rather than after, students will become more active participants in their own learning. *Frontloading*, the teaching which occurs before students read, leads to more purposeful and successful learning from reading. Reading becomes a means to add depth and to enhance concepts rather than to introduce them. Students move from freeloaders to independent learners.

New Perspectives No. 4: Bookthinking

How can we get students to *think* while they read? How can we teach them to actually *process* what they are reading rather than merely running their eyes over print? How can we involve students in carefully *reasoning* through a reading assignment instead of rapidly scanning it to locate answers to questions which have been assigned? How can we improve students' abilities to understand and remember what they read in our textbooks and other assigned materials?

Teachers frequently report frustrations with the quality of reading done by students on their content materials. The following comments are all painfully familiar to classroom teachers as they attempt to develop the content presented in a required reading: "I read it but I didn't understand." "I couldn't find the answers when I went through it." "It's too boring." "I don't remember what it was about." "This book is too hard." "I didn't read it." It becomes apparent that many students have not developed successful study strategies to help them learn from textbooks and other content materials.

Bookthinking. Study reading which is effective and efficient is an interactive process. It begins when the reader activates background knowledge and continues as he/she reflects on and reacts to ideas presented on the page. Bookthinking (Smith, Smith, Mikulecky, 1978) is the term we are using to describe study reading which is both active and purposeful. Bookthinking happens when the words on the page don't go in one ear and out the other (so to speak), but get stuck in the middle. Developing bookthinking skills in our classrooms involves several considerations: teaching procedures and vocabulary which are unique to each subject, providing opportunities to exercise skills and interests in each subject area, and developing study approaches appropriate to each subject.

But bookthinking also means:

(1) **Carefully controlling the range of questions asked about text reading assignments.** Bloom's (1956) taxonomy and Sanders' (1966) classroom questions are familiar to us all. However, in day-to-day

classroom practices, equitable distribution of questions across levels may not happen. We have good intentions, but since we probably get the best answers to our literal level questions, it is easy to slip into the habit of asking more and more of them. After all, everyone feels better about the lesson when responses are quick, plentiful, and correct. Unfortunately, what's really happening is that we are conditioning our students to read *only* for literal comprehension. Carl Smith (1978) of Indiana University suggests that the best weapon against getting stuck at the literal level of interpretation is a "cognitive map" for the teacher. This cognitive map is a concise description of the mental manipulations to be performed each day by competent readers. Under this plan, each lesson contains questions that will require students to:

- a. *Recognize* that they have some experience or purpose that enables them to associate with the content of a passage.
- b. *Recall* important details.
- c. *Analyze* information presented in order to achieve a specific purpose.
- d. *Judge* the worth of a passage.
- e. *Use* the passage in some logical or emotional (affective) way and thus extend its value for them.

(2) **Being specific about the knowledge needed for the criterion task.**

Research indicates that the greatest amount of learning occurs when students know exactly which parts of the text to concentrate on and exactly what they will have to do with their new knowledge. Knowing these things enables students to bookthink about the "right" things in the "right" way. One technique for accomplishing this is *adjunct questions*. Questions are strategically inserted in the text in the same format that they will appear on the test. When this is done, a whole host of good bookthinking practices ensue, such as reading and re-reading for review, checking comprehension before proceeding, and setting purposes for reading. When adjunct questions are written as essay and short answer questions, students bookthink better than when they are written in true-false, matching, or multiple choice formats. Various types of study guides are also important tools for helping students direct efforts toward appropriate segments of text (Smith, Mikulecky, 1978).

(3) **Providing adequate guidance for processing information.** Once students determine which parts of the text are relevant to them, two important changes take place in how they process the information: (a) they spend more time on the reading, and (b) their level of concentration and effort increases. Research by Thomas Anderson and Bonnie Armbruster of the Center for the Study of Reading (1980) indicates that *what* a student does with the information as it gets into his head (encoding) has a significant influence on how well it can be recalled.

At this point, selection by the teacher or student of the *kind* of study technique becomes extremely important. Research has *not* shown any one technique to be superior to another. In fact, technique effectiveness is determined by how well students have been *trained* to use the technique and by how *transfer-appropriate* it is. Training promotes bookthinking because the process for using a technique is developed and modeled, not merely presented. When there is a clear parallel between how something is learned and how it is tested, transfer is enhanced.

All these suggestions are directed toward bringing about a change in how students study-read, or bookthink. Sometimes, however, students may refuse to change their strategies. If they are studying something very short or easy, if they are studying something very dense or extensive, or if they sense a discrepancy between the tests and the daily lessons, they may refuse to change their study strategies. Our challenge as teachers, then, is to make sure that assignments and evaluations are appropriate, that we train students in the most efficient study techniques, and that we develop reading skill on all levels of understanding.

New Perspectives No. 5: The Executive Reader

Most teachers would agree that the goal of education should be to help students become self-directed learners who are able to learn on their own. Just as the new employee cannot be expected to possess the skills and strategies necessary to be an executive in the corporation, the students cannot be expected to have mastered the reading skills and strategies needed for adult reading. The teacher's job is to help the students become strategic readers. But the teacher can provide well-structured lessons and reading assignments only while the students are in their classes. Once the students graduate, they are on their own.

Corporate executives deliberately plan and orchestrate their efforts for maximum effectiveness and efficiency in getting the job done. When their efforts do not meet with success they assess their performance and shift their strategies. Afterwards they reflect on how they did, and decide on future actions. Planning, self-checking, assessing, and reflecting are actions which also characterize adult readers who read for specific purposes: executive readers.

Setting Purpose. Executive readers (Gates, 1983) know what they want out of reading. As adults, we seldom read anything unless we have a reason. Yet our students can seldom articulate a purpose for reading, except to complete the assignment. The reader who can state a reading purpose is more likely to understand the material and how it fits into the overall purpose for studying. The teacher can help the students to learn to set purpose by making clear the objectives for each assignment and discussing the purposes for reading.

Planning. Executive readers plan ahead. They choose effective strategies which will help them understand and remember what they read. They first assess what they need to learn and how they can best go about learning it. For example, if their purpose is to get the main ideas, they might choose to skim the entire contents before reading, noting titles, headings, introductions, and summaries. If their purpose is to remember details, they might choose to take notes or make an outline. Planning also includes estimating how much time it will take to complete the reading successfully, along with *when* and *where* the reading will get done.

Teachers can help students to plan for reading by suggesting appropriate strategies when they give assignments. They might talk about how they would approach the same assignment, and give students models of notes or outlines they would prepare.

Self Checking. Many students do not really know if they have comprehended until they take a test. Executive readers monitor their own comprehension as they are reading. When comprehension breaks down they stop and try to figure it out. They set check points in their reading when they will assess their comprehension and take advantage of questions and activities in the text to check their understanding. Most important, they watch themselves comprehend and are aware of how they do it. They can talk about what strategies they use and how effective they are (Armbruster and Brown, 1984).

Teachers can help students monitor their own comprehension by modeling self-questioning and self-correcting strategies. They can train students to stop when the reading doesn't make sense and try to figure it out.

Reflecting. Once they have completed an assignment, students usually quit. They may have to do a worksheet or answer questions in the book, but then they are done. Executive readers reflect about what they have read. They measure the outcome of their reading against their stated purpose. They take some time just to think about how the material fits in with what they already know and how it could change their thinking. They may make some notes about their reactions to the reading or even write a rejoinder.

Above all, the executive reader begins to ask "impertinent" questions. Just who is this author, and what are his or her qualifications? How current or accurate is this information, and what sources was it drawn from? The executive may question the integrity of the work or compare it to a better source. This is the beginning of what we call critical reading (Gates, 1983).

The executive reader knows how to mark a book. It is unfortunate that students cannot keep their books in school to underline and write marginal notes, since this is one of the most important college and

adult reading skills. The teacher can provide copies of articles and chapters which the students can use for marking. But most students need direct instruction in how to underline and write marginal notes, and they need to receive feedback from the teacher. Critical reading is best taught by a teacher who is a careful, critical reader. The teacher models critical thinking through questions, discussions, and tests which are designed to get the students to think.

Conclusion. Planning, self-checking, and reflecting are the strategies of an executive reader. Dale D. Gates (1983) contrasts the executive reader with the "polite guest." He says our students too often act like guests, afraid to ask impertinent questions about what they read, willing to accept whatever is written. Changing students into executive readers capable of thinking about what they read and acting on it is the task of the secondary content teacher.

New Perspectives No. 6: Mind Mapping

"Textbooks are written by *people*? I hadn't actually ever thought about that." This comment could probably have been made by many of our students. For them, a textbook has always been a compilation of facts and phrases not to be questioned. What gets lost, for many students, is the idea that a textbook is the middle link, an informational roadway, in a communication between an author and the readers. An author, after all, is attempting to get a message across. The author chooses a format, a style, and an organization which will best communicate that message. Readers are thus provided with a structure that will help them travel that roadway to meaning.

Certainly the process of comprehension means, most of all, an ability to extract the essence, to perceive the gist, to grasp the overall idea of a written passage. It is this ability to achieve an understanding of what the author is trying to get across that proves so difficult for many students. It is becoming apparent that the quality of the map laid down by an author and the ability to recognize and then follow this map by the readers, will determine to a large extent whether the main idea of a selection will be perceived at all.

Text Structure. Bonnie Meyer (1984) of Arizona State University has extensively examined the interrelationship between the author's map (how a text is organized) and the readers' map (comprehension). She notes that information in a text is organized into a *content structure* which is divided into higher to lower levels. The top levels of the content structure contain the text's main ideas, or *macropropositions*. Ideas found at the middle levels comprise supporting details, or *micropropositions*. Lower level ideas are the very specific details, those which provide more in-depth development of the ideas in the levels above them.

While many students begin their reading by digging right into these very specific details, Meyer argues that research shows that comprehension is contingent on the grasping of the macropropositions in a text's top-level structure. She identified five basic relationships which may form the structure of a text:

(1) **Causal.** A causal relationship is one in which one proposition (the antecedent) causes a second proposition (the consequent).

(2) **Comparison.** A structure using a comparison relationship emphasizes the differences or similarities between two or more topics. The relationship may be an analogy, alternatives, or an adversative relationship.

(3) **Collection.** A collection relationship groups ideas together based on common characteristics, such as time order or space order. Social studies texts often use a time order relationship.

(4) **Description.** A structure following a description relationship presents more information about a topic. Attributes, specifics, or explanations would be provided.

(5) **Response.** A response relationship is one centered around a question/answer or problem/solution format. Science articles often use this format.

Research examining the link between the reader's ability to discern the text structure and what the reader will remember from the selection supports several conclusions (Meyer, 1984). First people better remember ideas which appear in the top levels of a text rather than lower levels. Thus main ideas are more likely to be retained by competent readers. Second, students recall more ideas from a passage if it is organized in one of the five relationships described above. Third, students who can identify and use the text structure remember more from their reading than those who cannot. Fourth, students can be directly taught to successfully recognize the different text structure relationships used by an author.

Reading as Mind Mapping. Proficient readers at the high school and college level approach reading by looking for patterns which will tie together the ideas in a selection. They automatically search for the author's primary thesis, and then the relationships between the main ideas and the supporting details. In effect, they create a mind map of the main ideas and important subsidiary information which will enable them to understand and remember what they have read. This "mind map" becomes their interpretation of the author's message (Buzan, 19876, Russell, 1979, Hanf, 1971).

Ineffective readers, however, follow a *default* approach to learning and memory (Meyer, 1984). They lack a systematic plan for reading a selection and instead wander through the print without focus, lost and unable to read the map provided. Reading is a process in which they

simply try to remember something, anything from the text. Hence what is gained from a selection is usually a list of basically unrelated facts. The inability of ineffective readers to perceive the structure of the text causes them to miss the connections between the ideas they encounter in print. *This situation presents an especially critical roadblock to comprehension when students must deal with the unfamiliar topics typically found in content materials.*

Yet these students can also be taught to form mind maps as they read. Teachers can help students locate and use the *signals* which indicate the text is organized following a certain relationship. Signal words such as "because" or "in order to" denote a causal relationship. "In contrast" or "however" signify a comparison relationship. Preview statements, summaries, and headings also serve as signals. Materials which have an unclear or muddled text structure or which have inadequate signaling (inconsiderate texts) force the reader to *infer* how the ideas are interrelated, a much more difficult proposition.

Teachers can also teach students how to separate the macroproposition (main ideas) from the micropropositions (supporting details) in their reading. Effective study techniques which help students make these distinctions include writing short summaries, brief outlines, or abstracts of a selection. An especially effective technique which parallels the mind mapping occurring during the process of reading is the creation of student-made mind maps as a means to visually represent the relationships presented in a reading.

Helping students recognize the organization and relationships of the material they are asked to read will help them become better comprehenders and rememberers. If you would like more information on how to teach students to take what's on the page and reformulate it into a conceptual map in their minds, please join us for our discussion section.

New Perspectives No. 7: Memory and Learning

As teachers, we are always giving students signals regarding what we want them to remember. "This will be on the test." "Write this down." "This is important." We know a great percentage of what goes on in our classroom will be forgotten or will not be retrievable unless we motivate our students to consciously begin processing information and ideas into their memory.

Definitions. What do we mean by memory? Theorists identify three kinds according to Donald Norman (1982) in his book, *Learning and Memory*. The most basic, sensory memory, is on the periphery of processing signals which our eyes, ears, skin, and nose register. Over this kind of memory we have little control. But it is what we choose to filter from our sensory impressions and identify and classify that con-

stitutes the beginning of primary memory and conscious control. Within our primary memory we can begin to process information into our secondary or long-term memory.

Teachers address primary and secondary memory. We want students to recognize important ideas and information, remember, and be able to retrieve at will. "Learning" is a deliberate effort to process specific clusters of information into secondary memory so that this information can be recalled and used in a skillful way. Learning is closely associated with performance. The "skillful performance" may be writing a social studies essay or doing experiments in a laboratory.

Risk Takers and Understanders. The human brain seems to operate most efficiently greased with explanation and interpretation. Norman says, "We are designed to be understanders." We are also designed to be risk takers. Baker and Brown (1984) discuss recent findings that indicate readers have a high tolerance for reading material fractured by inconsistencies and omissions. Readers will spend extra time on incomprehensible material, will reread, will preview, and will attempt to mend what they cannot understand using whatever background knowledge they possess. People seem to have a great deal of faith that if we just hang in there, we'll eventually reach an interpretation and understanding that will help everything make sense. This risk taking is found in young children and adults.

As educators, we capitalize every day on our students' natural ability to take risks and seek understanding. Research over the years has sought the best methods to understand, to remember, to learn, and to acquire skilled performance. Authors (Norman, 1982, Russell, 1979, Loftus, 1980) list many ways to remember, and for the purpose of this newsletter these have been condensed to four strategies which appear to be basic to most memory systems.

- (1) The major property of memory appears to be a tendency to form links and associations.
- (2) Most people need to employ more than one sense modality in the learning process.
- (3) Memory seems to be most effortless, most quickly accessible, when processed by feature or image.
- (4) There is a need to rehearse, to practice, and to space practice over periods of time.

Classroom Implications. These strategies for learning, for retrieval, and for skilled performance are intrinsic in the following classroom activities.

Discussion and writing activities to find out how skilled students are and what they already know about a subject help teachers more effectively present new information or a new interpretation of old information. This is how we help students build on their already existing men-

tal framework to form new links and associations. In these newsletters we have called this teaching strategy "frontloading."

Practice, rehearsal, and the sense modalities are easily combined in any number of the classroom activities already discussed in connection with these newsletters. Learning guides with their many variations, structured overviews, and all kinds of class discussions and presentations offer opportunities to use the sense modalities and move learning along. There are proven formats that can be taught for taking useful lecture notes and textbook notes, strategies to learn effective summary and questioning skills, and formulas for efficient reading.

Since we remember most easily by feature or image, giving students a chance to see, read, and practice using new vocabulary is an effective way to help them remember and learn information and concepts.

Finally, the new word "metacognition" which means awareness of oneself as a learner and how we, as individuals, best learn, is the "80's" design for teaching study strategies (Armbruster and Brown, 1984). Not only should we teach the skills but also we should teach students to understand why study skills work and when to use them. Research on the metacognition concept continues to indicate that teaching students to be conscious of themselves as learners provides them with life-long methods to learn better. For instance, the use of mnemonic aids or memory systems such as jingles, easy to repeat phrases, can be classified as one of many study skills that can be directly taught, modeled, and used successfully by students. Mnemonic aids are an old but good way to memorize when all else fails.

Every student in high school today is entering a rapidly changing technological society requiring ever increasing levels of literacy. Students must view life as a continuing challenge to learn. They need models, encouragement, and support to try better ways of learning. Teachers are successful learners in their subject and are well-equipped to share their strategies with students.

New Perspectives No. 8: Reading Like A Writer

"How do I know what I think until I see what I say?" — E.M. Forster

At first glance this may seem a frivolous comment. However, it neatly sums up what anyone who has done a serious piece of writing knows: you understand that which you struggle to write down. Therefore, writing is one of the content teacher's most effective tools for promoting comprehension.

How is a reader like a writer? According to Pearson and Tierney (1984), a thoughtful reader is one who reads as though composing a test for yet another reader within. The reader/composer must set purposes, marshal prior knowledge, determine organization, and select

relevant information. These strategies already discussed in these newsletters can also be seen as a part of the composing model of reading described by Pearson and Tierney. The roles of their model indicate the kinds of activities which can be used to develop reading/composing skills necessary for thoughtful reading.

Reader as Planner. Thoughtful writers prepare for writing by assessing their background information, adopting a point of view, selecting an audience, and deciding on a format and focus. Thoughtful readers also ready themselves. Pre-reading activities such as using a structured overview prepare readers for the vocabulary, organization, and concepts of an assignment. Previews of follow-up activities before they read help students adopt a critical stance toward the topic.

Reader as Composer of Meaning. An effective writer is continuously selecting and rejecting ideas, information, and words. In addition, he/she arranges and rearranges ideas to better convey the meaning he/she intended. A reader uses similar composing skills to evaluate and classify information, to determine how purposes can be met, to identify organization and understand coherence of ideas presented. Activities such as guided notetaking, mapping, and using progressive study guides promote this focus on meaning.

Reader as Editor. Good writers pause occasionally to assess how well they're doing what they intended to do. They critically measure what they've written against their intentions and what they know about their audience. Then, they revise as necessary. Readers taught to annotate, make marginal notes, highlight and/or underline are making critical judgments as they read. They become more aware of the total message and its effects.

Reader as Monitor of Perceptions. Finally, a good writer develops a sense of what to do about a passage that is not working. Deciding whether to modify goals, get more information, reorganize, forge ahead, or throw it out and start over are only a few of the monitoring functions. The writer's ability to "know when you've got it" parallels the reader's ability to "know when you know it." These are the metacognitive skills we hear so much about (Armbruster and Brown, 1984).

How Can Writing Promote Better Reading? When we assign writing as a way to enhance understanding of content reading, we are directing students to practice at least two important learning principles we often preach. First, thinking with a pencil completes the "see it, say/hear it, write it" trilogy. Practice in a variety of modes not only promotes comprehension, but greatly increases the probability of moving ideas from short to long term memory. Secondly, the compos-

ing process increases the likelihood of the learners' being actively involved in reading. If students know they will be asked to write about what they are reading, they will more readily apply the bookthinking skills necessary for good comprehension.

How Can Content Teachers Incorporate Writing? At a recent district workshop promoting writing across the curriculum, teachers voiced concerns about making more frequent writing assignments. How can any more time be stolen from content for yet another "new" concern? What should the emphasis of grading a content paper be --content or mechanics? Where does the time needed for evaluation come from? These and other questions are best answered by keeping in perspective the concept of writing as a *tool* to help teach content. The primary purpose in using this tool is to clarify thinking. Because frequency of practice results in better writing, a secondary effect of employing this tool will be better writers. In grading, teachers may legitimately respond to what is said. A checklist system of evaluation may be a good way to handle both the time and grading concern.

What are some specific ways you can promote writing in your classroom? You might have students keep daily class journals. Set aside the last five minutes of class every day for students to record reactions and observations. Journals can be collected periodically and read with or without comment. Or perhaps you can find examples of narrative writing on topics presented in the text. Students can more easily emulate this style and format. Finally, remember to "publish" examples of good writing. Whether on the room bulletin board, in the hallway display case, or in the school newspaper, public recognition of good writing begets more good writing.

New Perspectives No. 9: Classroom Applications

This year the four Madison high school reading consultants developed an inservice course for all high school teachers which involved a monthly *New Perspectives* newsletter followed by a discussion session offered in each of the four high schools. In this final newsletter of the year we would like to share some of the responses from the inservice sessions. We hope this will spark some interest in trying out some of these ideas in your classes next year:

- There are always new ideas coming out, and this is a way for us to "keep current."
- I really appreciated all the super handouts which I will definitely be able to incorporate into my program.
- The material being presented was of value to me to use in my classroom. The types of examples and suggestions were helpful and interesting.
- I may review some of your packets this summer.

- A variety of techniques were explored, both for writing and reading in my science class. I feel more confident about trying some more writing assignments which I have neglected in recent years.
- Classes like this that are interdepartmental and inter-school are helpful not only in understanding reading problems and solutions in other areas, but also give us an opportunity to meet and enjoy other people ... I have a very positive feeling toward this class, and hope it will be repeated again so others can share its benefits.

What were some of the ideas tried out in the classrooms? One teacher worked on a study guide for her geometry students. "Some sections of our text are more difficult to learn than others. I wanted to see if study guides help when we studied these units." Another teacher mapped every chapter in *A Tale of Two Cities* for her ninth graders. "We use an unabridged version and it's tough reading. I mapped information about people, places, symbols so that students could see the literary richness of the book. My students then made their own maps of the book." A third teacher turned an old test into a study guide. "I decided that students need this information while they are reading, not after they have finished the book." An ESL teacher discovered mapping strategies a great help in his social studies and science classrooms. "Before I started mapping, the students tried to memorize everything. They put information into separate mental compartments. Now their new mapping skills and their search for the whole idea help them overcome the practice of rote learning." A teacher of computer science used a different notetaking procedure for each chapter of the book. Students were asked to outline, summarize, write questions, and map their chapters. He even had them write about computers as if they were feature writers for a newspaper. "Notetaking and study skills should be taught in every class, no matter the nature of the course. A teacher's job in any course is to help the students learn. They must be taught to read, write, and think carefully."

We hope these comments will encourage you to think about your courses next year, and that you will try to find ways to incorporate the teaching of study strategies. If you have any questions about any of the methods discussed in the newsletters or presented in the discussion sessions, please contact the reading consultant in your building. We will be happy to share our ideas with you, and work with you to implement them in your classes.

Doug Buehl is the reading consultant at Madison East High School. He is also the Chairperson of the WSRA Publications Committee.

Georgia Cook is the reading consultant at Madison West High School.

Karen Ehlert is the reading consultant at Memorial High School.

Doug Vance is the reading consultant at La Follette High School. He is also the IRA State Coordinator in Wisconsin.

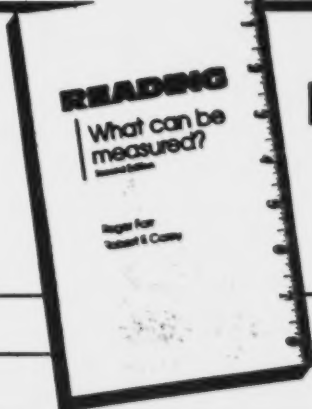
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*The content determines the process:
An ignored relationship in content area reading*

Cyrus F. Smith, Jr.
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Milwaukee, Wisconsin

In 1970, Harold Herber of Syracuse University made a major contribution to secondary school reading instruction. Specifically, the first edition of Herber's book *Teaching Reading in Content Areas* was published. Herber broke new ground by suggesting that the type of reading instruction required in subject matter classrooms was different from the type of instruction offered in reading classrooms. He acknowledged the difference in reading narrative style material and expository style material. He postulated that different skills and different degrees of skills were needed by students first to comprehend and then to understand the meanings found in subject matter texts. In effect, Herber recognized that the requisite skills needed to translate written symbols into speech utterances and to glean primary meanings were not sufficient to extrapolate the various meanings associated with subject matter reading. He suggested that a different set of skills and expectations is needed for effective reading instruction and efficient learning in subject matter classrooms.

Herber's work was based in part upon that of David Ausubell. Ausubell (1963; 1968) postulated that three conditions were necessary for meaningful learning about abstract ideas. These conditions are: that abstract material must be organized in a meaningful way; that the learner must possess a cognitive foundation to which learning can be attached; and, that the learner must have a strategy to learn from and the will to learn about the new ideas.

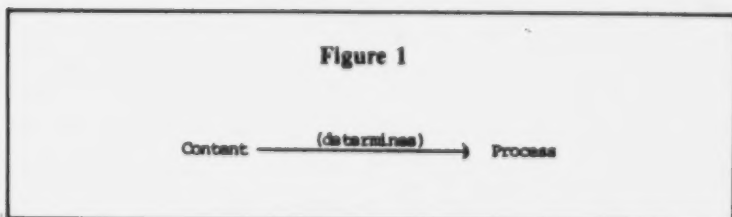
Consider, if you will, the importance of these three conditions. Specifically, they define a subject matter classroom in grades 4 through 12. The first addresses the uniqueness of the subject matter. The second describes the needs of the learner, i.e., previous relevant experiences. The third recognizes the interface between learner and lesson, i.e., a mechanism to learn from and the motivation to do so. Taken individually, these conditions are necessary for learning but are not sufficient. However, when they are considered collectively, one

can begin to see the interrelationships that begin to exist between learner and text and teacher. This relationship is symbiotic. All three conditions must be present in order for effective instruction and efficient learning to take place.

In the past fifteen years, the artifacts of content reading have proliferated. We have seen refinements and modifications of good ideas. Advance organizers became structured overviews which became graphic organizers which became post-graphic organizers which became semantic maps. Similarly, "study guide" became a generic term with a subset of such specialized items as pattern guides, anticipation guides, reasoning guides, concept guides, three-level concept guides, and on and on. Most recently, a new array of strategies has appeared. These new kids on the block include problem solving, synectics (analogies which use forced comparisons), sociodrama, and the like. These types of artifacts are reasonable and well-intentioned. Their collective purpose is to guide reading and reaction to the ideas proposed in subject matter classrooms. The success of such techniques, however is mixed. Therefore, the purposes of this article are to discuss the instructional artifacts of subject matter reading within the context of a content/process model to stress the judgment that the content does determine the process.

Content determines process

A model describing the content/process relationship (Figure 1) can be configured by examining the relationships which exist between and among these two ideas. The ideas, content and process, both contain



elements which are necessary if effective instruction and efficient learning are to take place. The key to the success of this model is the subject matter teaching. The teacher exercises perception and judgment in planning, presenting, and evaluating the lesson. The teacher plays two roles in this process. The first is that of subject matter specialist. The second is that of instructional leader. While these roles cannot be divorced from each other, they do require different levels of instructional anticipation and expectation.

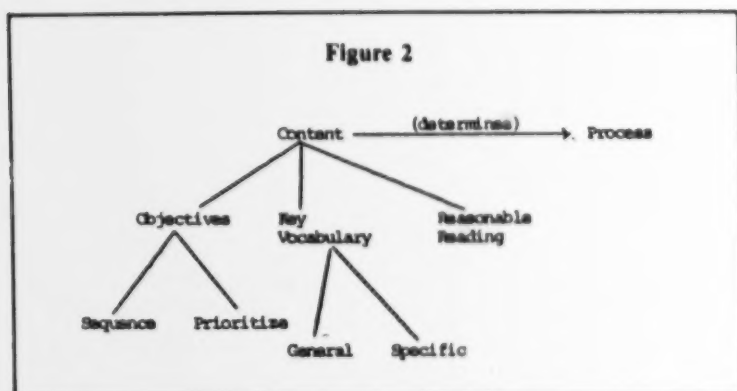
As the subject matter specialist, the teacher must first determine what is to be taught. This is done by considering the many possible objectives which could be taught in the context of a lesson. Teachers should keep in mind, at this stage, that not everything can be taught. Such limitations as time, background of students, available resources and the like all influence what can be taught. Further, not all ideas are of equal importance. Therefore, it is strongly suggested that the teacher first list all possible objectives, then sequence these objectives, and then prioritize them. In this manner, a reasonable instructional plan begins to develop. Once objectives have been determined, key vocabulary should be listed for each objective. Vocabulary knowledge is oftentimes the biggest stumbling block for students in acquiring new information. Again, not all vocabulary can be taught. It is suggested that the teacher select key vocabulary which is both general, i.e., important to the curriculum as a whole, and specific, i.e., found within the reading selection or vocabulary that will be used in a unique way. By developing a list of key words and terms for each objective, the teacher has a greater sense for teaching vocabulary which will complement rather than hinder his or her instruction.

...instruction in vocabulary can complement any curriculum when placed within the proper perspective. It is our recommendation that teachers think of vocabulary teaching in the framework of a developmental process. That is, vocabulary teaching has far greater utility and longer lasting effects when it is done in small but regular increments. Five minutes of daily instruction is far superior to intense but infrequent use of the dictionary or excessive amount of time spent on vocabulary recognition or memorization (Smith and Kepner, 1981, p. 24).

Finally, the teacher should consider the amount of reading required in the learning of each objective. As with the teaching of vocabulary, reasonable amounts of reading material are recommended. Students should be told to read selectively. Certain paragraphs would obviously require more close attention while others could be skimmed over or skipped entirely. These types of directions allow for a more positive interface with the reading material. In effect, the teacher guides student reading as a prelude to guiding student reaction.

As the instructional leader, the teacher performs two functions. Both of these functions are based upon a completed content analysis. After objectives have been sequenced and prioritized, vocabulary (Figure 2) has been determined, and reasonable amounts of reading selected for assignment, the teacher considers the types of reading/thinking skills to which students will be exposed. The selection of these reading/thinking skills is the first stage of a process analysis. The objectives to be taught obviously dictate the level of intellectual involvement. Objectives which have been sequenced and

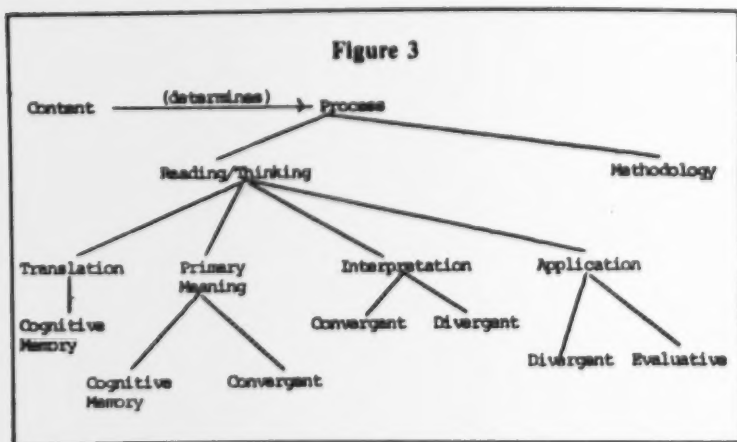
Figure 2



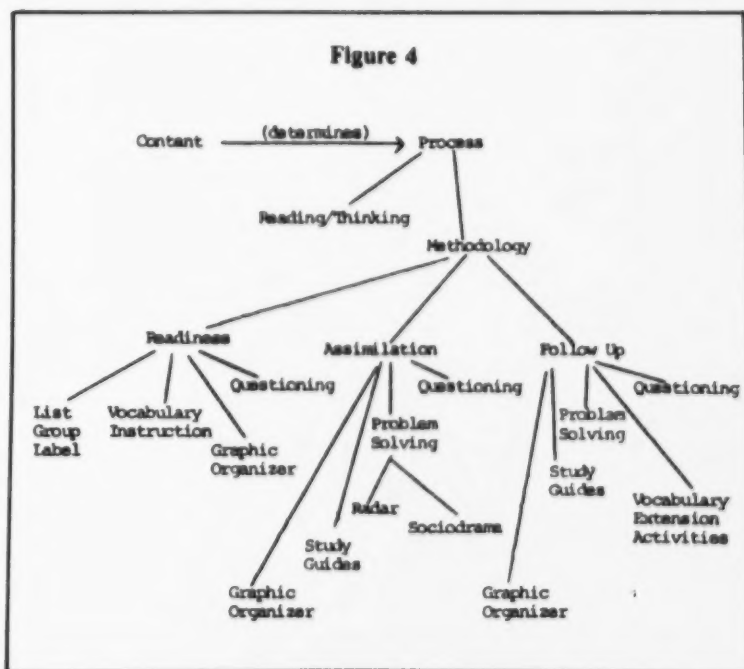
prioritized regarding their level of concreteness or abstractness can now be considered in terms of lower or higher order thinking. In a sense, the teacher anticipates how he or she will guide student reaction to the objectives being taught. Teachers are encouraged to challenge students at levels commensurate with their abilities. The selected objectives can now be identified which would require students to think convergently, divergently, or evaluatively. Similarly, the teacher can now begin to anticipate the types of instructional strategies he or she would use for students to learn these objectives in such a way as to internalize, extend, or reinforce the ideas.

The teacher is now ready to consider the methodology he or she can use for teaching the content at appropriate thinking levels. (Figure 3)

Figure 3



Readiness, assimilation, and follow-up activities should be considered. Certain strategies, obviously, are more appropriate for convergent or divergent or evaluative thinking. The teacher, though, is now in a more viable position of selecting a strategy for optimal instructional use. In effect, the content has determined the process. (Figure 4).



The main intent of this article was to reaffirm the position that content determines process. A rationale and a model for depicting the content/process relationship have been presented. (Figure 5) It has been my experience that oftentimes subject matter teachers in grades 4 through 12 use this process in reverse. That is, they decide that today a graphic organizer or a study guide or a vocabulary extension activity will be used in their classroom. Objectives are not considered, and the type of intellectual interface that students typically have is at the literal level. It is my contention that this type of lesson planning should be reversed. That is, objectives should be considered first, followed by potential levels of intellectual involvement, and then instructional

Writing to learn in social studies

Carol Santa

Valli Ostrem

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Kalispell, Montana

Writing is one of the most powerful techniques we have for helping students learn and critically think about social studies content. As history teachers, we want our students to understand that learning history is not the memorizing of facts and dates, but the active personal integration of concepts. Writing has become our most effective medium for helping students attain a deeper, conceptual understanding of history.

Before presenting some specific strategies for incorporating writing as part of history instruction, we would first like to explore why writing seems to produce such effective learning. Incorporating new knowledge with what we already know about a topic and integrating new information within our own personal frame of reference is truly the heart of learning. In order to attain this personal meaning, a student must become actively engaged in understanding and interpreting new information. Writing encourages such personal learning because it requires the student to use his own words and ideas to express a new concept. It provides students with the opportunity to practice making personal sense out of the information being presented. Writing moves learning from a receptive, passive phenomenon to an active productive situation.

In this article, we present two different writing activities which have helped our junior high and high school students learn social studies concepts. The first of these is a procedure for making well-focused writing assignments. Second, we describe how we have used journals as an integral part of history instruction.

RAFT: A Procedure For Making Assignments

The most common writing assignment, particularly in a content

area such as social studies, is an essay written by the student for the teacher. Since we as the audience already know the answer, our students typically do not understand the need to explain the topic either very clearly or completely. In addition, these essay assignments are usually broad and nebulous. Students often do not know where to begin and their ideas often differ from teacher expectations.

When assignments are specific and well-focused, writing can be enjoyable for students and teachers, and more importantly, can inspire students to learn more content material. RAFT is one assignment-making method which we have used successfully in our social studies classes (Holston & Santa, 1985). It is a procedure developed by Nancy Vandervanter, a junior high English teacher who participated in the Montana Writing Project.

RAFT is simply a system for making sure that our students understand their audience, the format of their work, and their role as a writer. These key ingredients are included as part of every writing assignment:

R: role of a writer - Who are you? a soldier, Abraham Lincoln, a slave

A: audience - To whom is this written? a mother, Congress

F: format - What form will it take? a letter, speech, journal

T: topic - Strong verb

Practically all of our RAFT assignments are from a viewpoint other than that of a student, to an audience other than the teacher, in a form other than the standard theme. Seldom do we use the word, "write" in our assignments, but instead incorporate stronger verbs such as "plead," "convince," and "clarify" which focus the assignment even more by setting the tone of the response.

RAFT assignments work well at the end of a unit to help students summarize main ideas and concepts. We usually begin by leading a discussion about the topic, and then as a class, brainstorm all of the roles we could play as writers. For example, at the end of a unit on the "Great Depression," roles such as a worker for the T.V.A., the wife of a farmer who lost her property in the dust bowl, and the president of an unstable bank appeared on the board. Once the roles were established, the students decided upon their audience and the format to inform their audience. The farmer's wife wrote a pleading letter to a friend in the city about the conditions on the farm. Students playing the role of a banker decided to write suicide notes to their families explaining why the financial condition of the bank led him to this fatal move.

Another RAFT assignment used by an American history teacher shows how an assignment can be specifically focused with key words

and ideas from reading materials. Half of the students in the class assumed the role of an officer attached to a U.S. military envoy in Europe. They were traveling for the Department of Defense to learn about European political and economic philosophies directly before World War I. These officers then wrote to their parents (the other half of the class) about what they had discovered in their travels. In their letters the students were to include comments about Sarajevo, Triple Entente, nationalism, Kaiser Wilhelm, and the Franco-Prussian War, which were the key ideas from a reading assignment. The parents then wrote back to the officer describing the implications of these events for the United States. This letter exchange turned out to be a very enjoyable and creative way to learn history because key events became integrated within a personal frame of reference.

We have also used RAFT assignments as major classroom projects. For example, a history instructor in our school district with the help of our English and journalism staff "master-minded" and produced a Civil War newspaper for the entire community. Four eleventh grade American history classes were involved in the project which took about a month from the time research began to the final edition. All students wrote two reports on any Civil War topic of their choice. Each class spent six full periods in the library doing their research. The teacher selected an editor and two associate editors in each class. This editorial team scrutinized all of the reports and selected the articles for publication. The journalism classes then took over and produced the final paper.

The paper included news reports, letters, obituaries, song reviews, medical columns, classified advertisements, and a personal advice column (Dear Lizzie). One of the letters to the "Dear Lizzie" column read as follows:

Dear Lizzie,

I am a woman in my early twenties, patiently waiting for my fiance to return from this terrible war. Up until now, I have stayed home very naive of all that has been going on, but when some of our boys passed through town today, I realized the tremendous effect on our country and on our people. What can I do to improve the condition of soldiers and help the war effort? I am not a rich woman or I would have donated my money to the cause. What else is there? I do not want my fiance to die of starvation or of cold from lack of proper clothing and boots.

Sincerely,
Want to Help

Dear Want to Help,

You could act as a nurse for the wounded soldiers as they

come through your town. You might try to gather enough money to buy or make proper clothes and food. I think that it is good that you realize some of the events of this war. A lot of women are asking and saying the same things about our loved ones. I am sure that you and some others can put your heads together and think of some ways to help men who are putting their lives on the line for our country.

Sincerely,
Lizzie

This Civil War newspaper was a source of pride and enjoyment for everyone. The editor of our local community paper was so impressed that he published the entire project as a special insert in the Sunday paper. Thus, the whole community enjoyed our students' efforts and even learned some history.

Journals

Not all writing in the content areas should be formal assignments read and graded by the teacher. Students also need opportunities to write informally. Journals provide a medium for informal writing to learn activities which can be readily incorporated within any social studies classroom.

Journal-writing in history takes a variety of forms from personal reactions to current and historical events to more formal prewriting experiences. In all situations, however, the spirit of the activity is for the student to write without fear of interrogation and the teacher's hemorrhaging red pen. The primary audience is always the writer.

We require each student to have a spiral notebook, kept in class, which they use for writing three to five times per week. Journal writing typically takes from two to ten minutes and occurs any time during the class period when writing seems appropriate. It is important that students write often so that journal-keeping becomes a habit.

Our most often used journal activity is to have students react personally to historical or current events. For example, after students have seen a film or read a selection, they use their own journals to record personal reactions. They often write questions they would like to ask key historical figures, or take on the role of a famous person and comment from their point of view.

In addition, we use journals to help students develop study skills. Journals can serve as a review for the previous day where students review their notes and then summarize in their journals. Students can also write down ideas about how to study for tests and later discuss how effective their strategies were in light of their performance.

Journals provide a system for helping students set the stage before

they read. We know that students will learn more from their reading if they take a moment to skim the chapter before they read. This might include reading the introductory paragraphs, bold headings, and chapter summaries. After students have done this surveying, they can write statements and questions about what they hope to learn from reading the selection. Such goal setting helps students to focus on key information in the reading assignment. After reading, students use their journals to answer their pre-reading questions and summarize information learned from the assignments. Journals, in this context, help students become more actively involved in comprehending and organizing information from their reading.

Another way to use journals is to ask students to write briefly about current events. The instructor may choose to hand out a news article, give the students class time to read it, and then have them write a reaction to the article. If done consistently, students by the end of the year will have their own personal history of key current events.

We have also used journals for more structured prewriting activities which typically evolve into assignments read and evaluated by teachers. One that has worked well is to provide students with a paragraph skeleton or frame (Alder, 1974). A paragraph frame is not a fill-in-the-blank exercise, but often provides a topic sentence and some structure such as basic transitions to help the student follow his ideas in coherent order. Students complete the ideas with whatever information they feel will develop the main point specified in the opening sentence. The framed paragraph which follows was used in an American government class to help students organize their thoughts into a one or two page explanation about the procedure for passing a bill in Congress:

The passage of a bill by Congress is a complex process. First.....
Then..... Then..... If..... then..... Sometimes.....
It must..... after..... Finally.....

Journals also work well for pre-writing. Breaking assignments into component parts and allowing students to brainstorm each part before they begin writing, produces better final papers than assigning a paper without pre-writing. For example, students often write about problems and issues in social studies. Recently, we asked our students to read an article in a current news magazine about famine in Africa. Students used their journals to keep track of ideas related to four aspects of the issue: What is the problem? What happens to the Africans as a result of the problem? What caused the problem? What do you think the solution to the problem is? As students read, they jotted down ideas within each of these categories and then used their notes to write a one or two page essay describing the current situation in Africa. Typically, the students wrote a four part paper correspon-

ding to the four questions. Thus, using journals as a mechanism to organize information before writing works well to help students think through issues before they draft their ideas into a more formal paper.

Journals have provided a system for writing to become a continual part of learning in a context that students enjoy. Journals create a sense of satisfaction that one's thoughts and personal reactions to historical events are important.

CONCLUSION

As educators we know that there is no magic formula for the development and improvement of student learning. Inviting and well-focused assignments have enabled our students to become active participants in the learning process. The RAFT assignment-making procedure and the journals have proven successful in our school district. Assignments which stimulate students to think critically and develop the ability to sort out the important from the superfluous are bound to be rewarding for everyone. Even more important, student leave the four walls of our classrooms with skills they can use for continual learning.

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***The classroom teacher as an action researcher:
Changing the basal reader reading period***

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The traditions of basal reader reading classes have been with us for years. Typically there are three groups who meet with the teacher in rotating turns. Each group participates in before-reading routines where the teacher has the children recite the new vocabulary from a list on the chalkboard and locate the day's story. This is followed by oral reading, in most primary grade classrooms and in many intermediate grade classrooms as well, where the children take turns reading around the circle and answering questions programmed from the teacher's manual. The teacher then assigns the workbook pages which become the independent seatwork so that the students will be engaged in work while the teacher goes through the same routine with the next group. The students then return to their seats to spend roughly 70% of their time doing the workbook pages (Anderson, et al, 1985, p. 74). Durkin's (1979) observations indicate that the primary teaching behaviors during these routines are mentioning and assigning. Reading research for the past ten years, summarized in the 1985 report by the Commission on Reading, *Becoming a Nation of Readers* (1985), gives us firm direction for changing these traditions. The action research challenge of this article is to begin restructuring your basal reading period to more strongly reflect current research.

Before I present some guidelines for restructuring a basal program, I feel compelled to say that the basic curriculum materials I would use, were I to return to the elementary classroom today, would be children's trade books and children's writing. My main goal would be to develop strategic readers and writers who also enjoy these activities. There are successful programs based on the best of children's literature such as the Crestwood School in Madison, Wisconsin, where Joan Yatvin is principal. However, I recognize that many teachers and school districts do not feel comfortable with that type of program at this point.

What would be the characteristics of the basal reader classroom which has been modified to incorporate current research and the recommendations from *Becoming A Nation of Readers*?

Teachers make decisions. A first step away from the rigid pattern of basal reader instruction is to begin changing how those materials are used. Certainly basal publishers could change the materials themselves to strengthen them. However, even with change, the best basals can do is present lessons for the mythical average child. I have yet to meet this average child. Therefore, if basals are to be used to best advantage, they must be placed in the hands of knowledgeable teachers who know how to and will make decisions about what to retain, omit, and add to lessons to best meet the needs of students. Lessons should no longer be done simply because they are in the teacher's manual.

Teachers teach. The evidence suggests that the influence of the teacher is stronger than the influence of a particular basal series (Anderson, et al, 1985, p. 85). Teachers need to reassert their important role as teachers. This means selecting worthwhile objectives for the children and developing motivating instructional sequences that lead children to see how what they are learning applies when they read on their own. Teachers can select from among three general teaching procedures to accomplish their goals: modeling, discovery, and direct explanation (*Wisconsin State Reading Curriculum Guide, 1986*). Learning what the teaching options are gives teachers independence and freedom to make choices so that they need not be limited by the single approach presented in basal readers.

Teaching lessons focus more on development of children's independent strategies for identifying words and getting meaning from the text than on isolated skills. Much of the "work" children are asked to do within the context of a basal lesson is isolated skill work which becomes an end in itself. The power of *replacing* much of the isolated skill work with strategy instruction is that teachers are equipping the children with plenty of action they can use on their own when they are reading independently. For example, learning how to do basic inference and when and where to use it has generalizability to many contexts within and outside the reading period. Selecting multiple choice responses on an inference worksheet does not.

THE LESSON SEQUENCE

Before Reading —

Activate and/or build background knowledge. One of the variables with the strongest impact on comprehension is the reader's background knowledge (Anderson, et al, 1985, p. 50). The preparation for reading section of the lesson, which is frequently omitted

(Durkin, 1984), should be designed to activate children's knowledge so that they can integrate what they know with the central theme of the selection and/or the key concepts (Jett-Simpson, 1983).

Teach the vocabulary ESSENTIAL for comprehending the selection. This means teachers select up to five words for direct instruction. These are words for which the children *must* know the pronunciation and word meaning in order to comprehend the selection and of which the meaning is not clear in the context of the selection. The teaching procedure for these words should allow children to show what they know about their pronunciations and meanings *before* teachers provide activities and information to build meanings.

Use the text structure as a guide in selecting the comprehension strategy to emphasize for instruction. In many cases, a valuable component of the lesson is instruction of a comprehension strategy that the children can apply directly to the selection they will read. For example, story mapping is an appropriate strategy for children to apply to stories in order to identify what is the important information to remember (Jett-Simpson, 1983). Main idea and supporting detail is appropriate for expository text. By teaching the strategy and then showing the children when, where, and why to apply it, teachers help children develop mental files of plans they can use when reading selections on their own.

During Reading —

REPLACE the Directed Reading Activity with a high active student involvement strategy. The Directed Reading Activity is highly teacher-centered and not designed to guide the children to be strategic - to move toward constructing meaning independently. The procedure is very familiar to elementary teachers. The teacher tells the children to read the page to find out... children read, then answer programmed basal questions. Then they proceed to the next page and continue in this manner to the end of the story. A good initial substitute for the DRA is the DRTA, the Directed Reading Thinking Activity, where the teacher's role is to guide the children to make predictions about the selection and then confirm or reject the predictions based on evidence from the text and background knowledge.

Allow children to read silently before reading orally. Research suggests that this practice improves the fluency of the oral reading (Anderson, et al, 1985, p. 52). Children need the opportunity to directly apply their own strategies to reading the text before being asked to perform by reading aloud. At beginning reading levels, children do not read silently, but they can read quietly to themselves.

SUBSTITUTE other forms of oral reading for round robin reading. Young readers and poor readers need opportunities to practice oral

reading for fluency or to develop automatic word recognition. Partner reading, where two children read together and encourage each other to self-monitor miscues that change meaning, gives them far more practice than the half-minutes or so they typically get to read aloud in the round robin organization (Jett-Simpson, 1985).

Guide the children to self-monitor miscues that change meaning. One basic question the children should ask themselves as they read in the reading group and along is, "Does this make sense?" When it doesn't make sense, they should be guided to use the following strategy to self-correct. (1) Read the rest of the sentence and think about the meaning. (2) Look at the word parts for clues to pronunciation. (3) Try out a word in the sentence. (4) Ask themselves, "Does it make sense?" If yes, read on. If no, try again. Poor as well as able readers should be guided to use the strategy.

After Reading —

Focus the after-reading discussion on important parts of the text and on application of comprehension strategies. Characteristics of an effective after-reading discussion include the following: (1) questions that focus on important aspects of the story; (2) responses from the children where they are required to give evidence from background knowledge and text to support their answers; (3) discussion interaction among children not just with you as the teacher; and (4) linkage of the discussion to the before-reading development of background knowledge, the essential vocabulary, and the comprehension strategy. Simply stated, invite the children to *think* about what they have read and give evidence of their thinking process.

SELECT word identification skills lessons carefully. It is simply not necessary, nor is it effective teaching, to try to work with a large number of isolated decoding skills during a single basal lesson. The children can become easily confused. If you are teaching a decoding skill, my recommendation is to select one to teach well. Teach it to the application level where the children can use it directly when they read selections, before moving to another decoding skill. During this time, the children could be doing review or maintenance lessons on several others. One implication of this recommendation is that you will be omitting some skills from your instructional plans. For example, several prime candidates for omission are the schwa and primary, secondary, and tertiary accent. Another implication is that you will be developing a list of priority skills, ones that will directly assist the children in becoming effective readers. The phonics recommendation summarized in *Becoming a Nation of Readers* (p. 43) is to do phonics instruction early, keep it simple, and complete the developmental phonics program by the end of the second grade.

Teach decoding skills lessons only to children who need them. Learning decoding skills is only a means to an end - a crutch to reach real reading. Many children figure out the code on their own, so they do not need the intervention of decoding skills instruction. These children are already readers.

Assign meaningful seatwork. Meaningful seatwork requires the children to respond to the selection with application of comprehension and vocabulary strategies and/or personal reactions and interpretations. Three modifications of the typical basal reader period can contribute to more meaningful independent seatwork.

1. **Reduce or eliminate workbook and worksheet work.** Workbooks formats typically require children to select answers rather than construct their own by directly demonstrating their thinking. In addition, workbook pages are frequently unrelated to the selection read. I would recommend not more than 10-15 minutes of the independent seatwork period be given to workbooks.
2. **SUBSTITUTE writing for multiple choice workbook pages.** Writing requires children to do their own thinking in order to construct meaning. It is one of the most direct forms for children to use to demonstrate their comprehension. Beginning readers should also have the opportunity to write. Although their spelling will not be conventional, their invented spelling will illustrate their direct efforts in identifying sound/symbol correspondences (Jett-Simpson, 1986).
3. **INCLUDE READING AS PART OF THE READING CLASS.** The best practice for reading is reading and more reading. At least 20-30 minutes of the reading period should be given to daily silent reading. This is in addition to a Sustained Silent Reading period, at another time during the school day, where everyone in the class reads silently together. Obviously, first graders can not silently read, but they could do partner reading or buzz to themselves. They may not be able to sustain themselves for fifteen minutes in the beginning, but it is a goal they can work toward.

Beyond the Basal Reading Period —

Guide the children to apply the comprehension and vocabulary strategies learned in reading to all content area reading throughout the day. Why are we teaching reading anyway? Our goal is to guide children to become *independent* readers who can think interactively with text. We can support their growing independence by showing them how to use what they have learned in the wide reading contexts of their world.

Read aloud daily. The following quote from *Becoming a Nation of Readers* sums it up nicely.

There is no substitute for a teacher who reads children good stories. It whets the appetite of children for reading, and provides a model of skillful oral reading. It is a practice that should continue through the grades.

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Modifying reading software

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The current flood of reading software for microcomputers in classrooms has been evaluated for educational and motivational effectiveness, ease of use, clarity of screen display and directions, error handling, reliability, visual effects, and value for the money. Those which teachers rated high have found their way into American classrooms. Unfortunately, these software packages promote reading skills acquisition and drill in only the most general ways. Bitter and Gore, in their book, *The Best Educational Software for Apple II Computers* (1984), refused to recommend ANY reading software programs. They supported their position by contending, first, that current reading programs are little more than tests and workbook pages transferred to floppy disks. Secondly, they cautioned that the current reading software are too limited in terms of length and coverage. They believe that classroom students would run through the canned lessons so quickly that the skill to be practiced would become boring and meaningless. A plausible explanation for their position is that the words, sentences, concepts, and ideas included as the "content" of current reading software have been identified for inclusion by commercial programmers and publishers, not by the classroom teacher. In order to attract the widest possible audience, the content of software lessons are drawn from established graded word lists and popular stories rather than from specific selections teachers have found that work well with their students. Similar to the dilemma posed by the programmed instruction materials of the past and worksheet exercises of today, teachers, consequently, have had to either alter reading instruction to match the software content or develop the programming skills necessary to create their own software skills lessons to match their instructional objectives. Current microcomputer software companies should be obliged to include built-in systems for enabling teachers, who are not accomplished programmers, to modify commercial software to match the content of the reading lessons they actually teach. And these teachers should be able to make these content changes with relative ease!

A growing number of new reading software is, in fact, now available which allows for "modifying" content. That is, authoring/editing procedures have been included by commercial programmers to allow teachers to enter their own text (i.e., specialized words, sentences, and concepts) into the software to match the content of their present objectives for reading instruction. The clear benefits of including modifying procedures in commercial software are (1) increased lifetime of the software for classroom use, (2) greater opportunities for truly individualizing reading skills instruction, and (3) most importantly, a means for fusing process (i.e., skills and strategies) and content (i.e., facts and concepts) in reading instruction. That is, computer software skills lessons can be modified and used to preview and/or reinforce real reading situations, acting as prereading and postreading activities within the directed reading lesson.

Computer software companies, such as Data Command, Davidson & Associates, Edu-Ware Services, Hartley Courseware, Microsoft Corporation, and Sunburst Courseware, currently offer reading software with special modification features. When used for readiness and/or reinforcement of basal or content area reading instruction, these software packages can be modified to alert students to key concepts in the reading content, thus promoting process along with content as students learn by reading. Software packages which introduce and provide practice with antonyms and synonyms can be modified to show students how new concept terms in the to-be-read selection relate to words already in their existing vocabulary. Analogies software programs can be modified to reinforce skills application (e.g., rhyming words, homonyms, parts of speech). And finally, but far from least, software lessons designed to teach students to distinguish fact from opinion can be modified as a prereading guide to include statements from assigned reading for activating students' critical thinking.

Features in Modifying Reading Software

Each software company varies somewhat in its modification features and procedures, starting with how each refers to modification: one refers to an "editor" for changing or creating the content while others refer to the same operating system as the "system generator," the "teacher feature," "do-it-yourself lessons," and the "authoring program." Generally, however, all modifying programs are designed to enable teachers to make corrections in existing lessons with ease as well as to add or remove content from a lesson. This means that you can make some changes in programs already in the disk, or you can elect to create a whole new program of your own. Most modifications are designed to be made on the original commercial program disk; some programs, however, require you to use a blank disk to make and

save your modifications. Programs of modification contain "frames" in which teachers' content changes and additions may be written for their lessons. Frames are simply those text and graphic images that you see on the computer screen at any given time. While frames vary in length from software program to software program, the maximum length for any frame is 25 characters per line and nine lines per frame. These length limitations are imposed, in part, to prevent too much text from appearing on the screen at one time. Ascribing to the KISS principle, you are obliged to "keep it short (and) simple." The total number of frames available also varies from program to program, but in almost all cases, you will have more than enough frames to include all the content information you want to present to your students. There are at least four distinct frame types:

- (1) instruction frames,
- (2) information frames,
- (3) response frames, and
- (4) hint frames.

Instruction frames. These frames are designed to present goals and directions to the student(s), that is, the reason the lesson is being presented and how the content is to be learned. Here is where you would title the lesson and briefly explain the type of lesson this is to be. This is where you can show students that you have personalized the content of this software lesson to relate to a specific reading selection you are about to read or have just finished. For example, you might introduce a prereading software lesson which requires readers to use their reasoning skills (process) and prior knowledge (content) to determine whether statements taken from their next reading assignment are either fact or opinion:

PREDICTING FACT AND OPINION

Can you predict which of the following statements from your next selection, "Eruption," are FACT OR OPINION? Come to agreement in your group about each statement. Use your reasoning powers and prior knowledge to guide your decisions.

PRESS RETURN 1

REMEMBER: an OPINION is what someone believes. A FACT is a true statement.

Read each statement and type "F" for fact or "O" for opinion. We'll compare our predictions as a class.

PRESS RETURN 2

Instructions such as these send a convincing message to students that this activity has real purpose for readying them to comprehend the selection, "Eruption." The processing skills of reasoning dealt with in this software lesson apply directly to the way in which students are to think about the content of the selection: what scientists "know" and "believe" about volcanoes and eruptions.

Information frames. These frames present a sequence of explanation and examples about the specific reading skills for which the commercial software was originally designed, such as teaching younger learners how to identify details in stories that tell "what" and "where." This is a great place you can relate those skills being developed in these frames to a specific story the students have just read. As the skills are defined, reference to the story can be inserted and subsequent examples can be modified to illustrate the skills with text portions drawn from the story. For example, you might modify a "where" information frame with:

In your story, "Ben's Surprise," we read about a lot of places where the story took place. WHERE tells us the "place" that something happened. EXAMPLE: 'going up the street' tells us WHERE Ben was going.

In modifying this frame, students are able to see a direct connection between "where" details and the events of a story that they know. Thus, they recognize firsthand the way in which the skill has been applied. Students become actively involved with this skill because they can identify the relationship between the where (process) and the what (content). What is more, a by-product of this lesson is the reinforcement of memory for story details.

Response frames. These could also be called question frames because the students are asked here to show what they have learned from the information frames. Here is where you draw from the story, selection, or article the content words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs which require the students to practice applying the skill taught in the information frame. You have the option of asking single response questions, such as those requiring yes/no, true/false, or agree/disagree responses; or you can ask multiple response questions with up to four choices, such as A, B, C, or D. For example, you might want students to show in a postreading software lesson that they understand what words in their general vocabulary are synonyms for key terms from the selection they read, "Flying Like Birds":

FLY is a synonym for
SOAR. Is GLIDE a syn-
onym for SOAR?

a. yes

b. no

answer: _____

All response frames include a line for you to enter the correct answer and the option to present an "explanation response" if the student selects an incorrect answer. In the yes-no frame above, for example, if a student selects the incorrect "no," you might provide an explanation response that could resemble the following:

FLY is a synonym for
SOAR. Is GLIDE a syn-
onym for SOAR?

a. yes

b. no

answer: b

Select a synonym for
SOAR.

a. ride b. jump

c. glide d. walk

answer: _____

a
should yes
be (synonyms have
similar meanings)

In cases where you include four choices from which to select the correct answer, you have the option to select the number of retries you want to provide the students along with or without an explanation or sometimes even a hint frame (more on this type below). Your use of explanations is an opportunity to be there for the students when they discover that they are not understanding what you presented. Since you know, frame by frame, what is important to remember, you can tailor each response frame explanation to fit the students' need for recovering from mistakes in understanding.

Hint frames. This type of frame is an option in only a few software modifying programs. Designed to follow multiple choice response frames, you can provide a specific explanation to students for each incorrect response that they make. For example, in the "Flying Like Birds" multiple choice response frame above, you might provide the following hint frame for the incorrect choice (d.) walk:

Hint Frame

Remember: Synonyms are words with similar meanings. Walk and Soar are NOT similar in their meaning. Look for another choice that IS similar in meaning to Soar.

These frames are particularly useful to guide slower learners to identifying what synonyms are and acquire the new vocabulary introduced in "Flying Like Birds." As stated earlier, few modifying systems to date include this option for guiding slower learners, and these hints can be time-consuming to create. In any case, this option can enable you to truly individualize skill instruction while promoting the acquisition of meaningful content.

These frames in the software's modifying system combine to provide you with a means for truly integrating reading skills and content instruction so that both process and content are being promoted through the software lesson. Your familiarity with the role each frame type plays in the lesson will help you to plan for logically sequenced and contextually meaningful instruction and practice.

Procedures for Modifying Reading Software

Within the growing community of modifiable reading software, even a casual perusal indicates that there are many different kinds of editors used to develop the software packages. While each one is unique in some feature or procedure, all allow for at least some versatility and ease for modification, that is, creating new program lessons, changing existing programs, adding or removing items from new or existing programs, and making corrections. In at least some part, all modifiable software packages suggest and/or include the following procedures.

1. Identify from your instructional objectives what process skills you want to develop along with the appropriate content from your reading selection(s) to assure that your skills/content software lesson will be a meaningful activity. Depending upon the type of skill(s) you want to teach, compose your list of words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs drawn from the content of your reading selection(s). For incorporating your list into the modification program, you will need:
 - an instruction frame introducing the purpose and directions of the lesson
 - at least one information frame (but probably many more) which defines each skill to be learned and practiced along with illustrated examples drawn from your reading selection(s)
 - a response frame for each word, phrase, sentence, or paragraph on your list along with (a) a 2-or 4-choice test item, (b) the correct alternative, and (c) an explanation for helping students understand why an incorrect choice does not work
 - a hint frame (optional where offered at all) for each incorrect choice in each response frame to guide students to seeing the correct alternative.
2. Select a modifiable commercial reading software package that will allow you to insert your modifications with relative ease. Choosing a software package that already teaches the skills you have identified for your reading selection is generally the

easiest route to go; but if you can't find a modifiable package which deals with your chosen skill objective, don't be afraid to modify some other software package.

3. Start up the "Teacher Files" portion of the software to view the menu of modification options. Generally, you will have to press control-T or control-I while your software is booting up (while the red light is shining on your disk drive). In some cases, you will have to type MENU when they ask for a name to enter the teacher files.
4. Select the option file which allows you to make your desired modifications. If this is your first time modifying software, choose the "Correct/Change List" file instead of the "Create List" file. Although the automatically generated program for inserting your composed list of frame information is the same for both files, you will find making corrections to existing text quicker and more understandable in the correct/change file than you would in the create file. Another tip for beginners is to start small -- with five or six modified items rather than 25. After you have done a few short ones and learned the minor quirks of each system, then move to the create file for the speed of input it allows experienced teacher modification users.
5. Follow the frame requests in the system's editor to build your modified file. Generally, you will start out with completing an instruction frame, followed by information frames, then response frames with explanations. Where the option exists and is selected, each response frame is followed by a corresponding hint frame.
6. When you have entered all your modifications into their proper frames, signal the computer that you are ready to go on by typing a "#" or some other designated quit signal in the program. You will then be asked to decide on some "design options." These can include decisions to (1) present your frames in a random or set order, (2) give students a certain number of tries on each frame before displaying the correct answer, (3) terminate the lesson after a number of incorrect answers because a student is doing very poorly, (4) terminate a lesson after a number of consecutive correct answers because student is doing very well, and (5) show questions a student missed again after the lesson is completed.
7. You should then follow menu procedures for naming/renaming your new file and saving it on the disk for students to run. If you have modified an existing file by selecting the correct/change file, simply name the file a different title from the one you changed. This way, you end up with a new file of your own and the original file remains unchanged.

8. Finally, run the program as a lesson to check for errors and typos. Clean any of these up in the correct/change file in the same way you created the frames. Then ask some colleagues or a student to run the lesson and get their feedback before you try it out in your classroom reading lesson.

Summary

Modifying commercial reading software which have been programmed with built-in editing procedures holds great potential for putting teachers into the control seat in reading instruction. When teachers can decide what the content of software skills lessons will be, they can draw that content from the stories and articles they require their students to read. And by doing so, students can see directly how their skills instruction helps them draw greater meaning from those readings. In short, the content modifications bring a value to the software skills lessons that students cannot ignore. They see for themselves that reading involves both process and content: the hallmark of any successful reading program.

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Alan L. Jante
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M-ss-ng L-inks, designed by Carol Chomsky and Judah L. Schwartz. Sunburst Communications, Inc., Pleasantville, NY, 1983. For Apple II+, IIe, IIC: 48K, Atari 400, 800: 48K, Commodore 64, IBM PC: 64K PCjr.: 128K, and TRS-80: 48K, Network III: 48K systems. US \$59.00 for passage packages and US \$69.00 for editor package. Lab packages also available at three times the cost.

Success With Reading, designed by Mitchel Balsam and Cary Hammer. Scholastic, Inc., New York, NY, 1984. For Apple II+, IIe, IIC: 64K, and Commodore 64 systems. US \$99.95 for program package. US \$59.95 for grade specific units.

The cloze procedure has long been an established method to evaluate a student's ability to use context clues and to practice using this cueing information to uncover unknown segments of text. For those reading educators looking for micro-computer software that uses the cloze procedure, the two packages examined in this review can be considered. *M-ss-ng L-nks* and *Success With Reading* both offer the student practice in supplying letters and words that have been systematically deleted from short reading passages.

CLOZE PRACTICE

M-ss-ng L-nks provides cloze practice in three different passage packages. "Young People's Literature" uses nine passages each from nine classics from children's literature such as *The Wind in the Willows* and *The Cricket in Times Square*. "Classics, Old and New" takes 81 excerpts from sources including Shakespeare, Dickens, and the Bible. "MicroEncyclopedia" uses eight short paragraphs from seven subjects such as baseball, inventions, and ice cream. These practice packages are sold separately. No specific grade level is suggested for any of them.

When the student begins *M-ss-ng L-nks*, she/he has several options to customize the manner in which the cloze activity will be presented. The student can read through directions on how the program works, choose a one or two player format, select the topic and passage to be

completed, pick the cloze format for the activity, and determine the number of guesses allowed before the program supplies the answer.

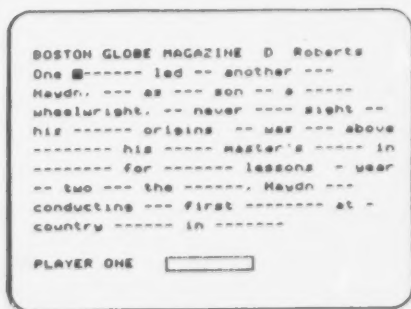
The nine formats (Figure 1) differ in difficulty from "A" where all vowels are deleted, to "E" where all consonants are deleted, to "I" where the screen is completely blank. For each blank, the student has

Figure 1

- A. Wh-ch f-rm-t d- y-- w-nt?
- B. W-i-h -o-m-t -o -o- w-n-?
- C. W---- f----- d- y-- w---?
- D. Which ----- do --- want?
- E. --i-- -o--a- -o -ou -a--?
- F. ----h ----- -o --u ---t?
- G. Which ----- -- --- ----?
- H. ----- -- --- ----?
- I. - (No Clues)

the option of having up to five guesses before the answer is provided. An example of the type of passage a student might attempt (Figure 2) has every other word deleted. The cursor is positioned at the first blank, but it can be moved anywhere on the screen by using the arrow keys. (When run on an Apple II+, several control key commands must be used to move the cursor around the screen.) If a blank is not solved within the set number of guesses, the computer will supply the

Figure 2



missing letter. Wrong guesses result in a simple "beep." When the two student option is selected, the first student gets to play as long as she/he does not use the number of allowed wrong guesses. When this occurs, the computer supplies the answer and the second student has his/her turn at trying to complete the passage. When the entire passage has been completed, the score is displayed (Figure 3).

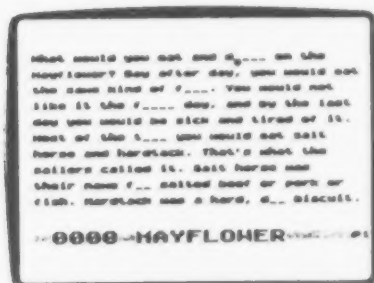
Figure 3

	ONE	TWO
Number of blanks:	75	75
Number of guesses:	20	20
Number of correct first guesses:	27	28
(% of total):	(36%)	(37.3%)
Number of wrong guesses:	43	15
Number of letters the computer supplied:	7	2
(% of total):	(9.4%)	(2.7%)
OVERALL SCORE:	76.6	95.2

The cloze practice provided in *Success With Reading* is organized into grade specific units: six different levels for use from grades three through eight. Six reading passages each are taken from six books at each level. The readability levels of the books range a year below and above the grade level of each unit. Before reading a cloze passage, the student can choose from the six books. The student also has the option of starting at the beginning or on any of the six pages from the book. Unless the passage has been edited (See THE EDITOR), the student begins to work on a passage (Figure 4) where words have been randomly deleted except for the first letter. The student begins working from the beginning of the passage. A correct response results in the letter appearing; incorrect choices result in an "x" flashing in the space. If a missing letter is not identified after a certain number of tries, the computer will begin to fill in the letter a dot at a time until the letter is filled in completely. Points are awarded and appear on the bottom of the screen. Once the entire passage is completed, a congratulatory message appears along with the final score. An animated "tractor" delivers this message.

M-ss-ng L-nks provides more student-controlled options than are provided in *Success with Reading*. The latter has no optional screen directions for completing the cloze practice, no choice in the cloze format, no choice in setting the number of guesses before the answer is provided, and no two-player option. *Success with Reading* does provide some of these features to the student through various teacher options (See TEACHER OPTIONS.); however, these options are not under the direct control of the student. *M-ss-ng L-nks* has the ability to restrict any of its student options through a teacher options menu (See TEACHER OPTIONS.). The deleted word format found in *Success with Reading* is more like a standard cloze pattern (Figure 4). This feature enables students to make better use of various cueing systems (semantic and syntactic) that may not be available in some of the *M-ss-ng L-nks* cloze formats. Some of these formats (C, F, G, H, and I in Figure 1) provide more of an opportunity to make wild guesses rather than a learning opportunity to sharpen student understanding of the language clues that help us find meaning in unfamiliar text.

Figure 4



The Editor

Both of these programs have an editor feature which enables additional cloze passages to be created. The editor in *M-ss-ng L-nks* must be purchased separately; whereas, it is a feature of the program package in *Success with Reading*. Both editors are very easy to use.

Two features of the *M-ss-ng L-nks* editor detract from its otherwise good quality. First, passages can only be created in upper case letters. Second, editing a created passage is done by retyping the entire line containing the portion to be changed.

In addition to creating new cloze passages, the *Success with Reading* editor can be used to edit original passages in any of three different formats: all vowels omitted, all letters omitted, and all but first letter omitted. Newly created cloze passages cannot be created in the format found in original passages (Figure 4).

Teacher Options

The ability to modify different features found in the cloze practice activities before they are used by students is a feature found in both of these packages. *M-ss-ng L-nks* allows the various options to be either controlled by the student or pre-set by the teacher. These include: the one or two player format, the topics and passages available for practice, the cloze format, and the number of guesses. In addition, sound effects can be turned on or off by the teacher. Once set, these options can be saved on the diskette.

Success with Reading allows the teacher to pre-set features available during cloze practice. However, once they are set, students have no control over them. The amount of time before the answers begin to appear can be controlled from 6 to 40 seconds, and the scoring feature as well as the sound effects can be turned on or off. A game feature allows a little graphic called a "tractor" to be used during practice. While the student is filling in the missing letters, the tractor can be set to appear and race across each line of the passage. Every time a cor-

rect letter is selected, the tractor is halted momentarily. The speed of the tractor can also be determined. As a further challenge, the tractor can be selected to remove letters if it gets past the point where the student is working. Thus the tractor creates more blanks that must be filled in by the student.

Like *M-ss-ng L-nks*, all of these settings can be saved on the diskette before they are used by the student. However, *Success with Reading* goes one step further and allows these settings to be individually set for every student who will be using the diskette. This is done through the creation of a user's list which contains the names of all students who can use the diskette. When the user's list is created, the student can use the diskette only if his/her name is recognized by the program. When the student gains access, any cloze practice will use the specific features pre-set for him/her by the teacher.

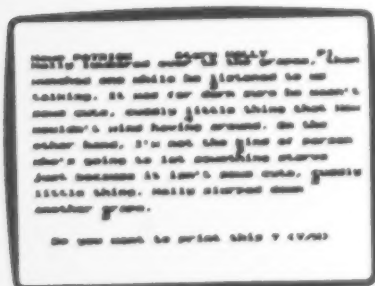
Documentation and Other Features

Both programs feature good documentation covering all of the available components in each program. *Success with Reading* makes greater use of screen displays in its documentation to show the contents of various menus. It also has a very extensive section in both program and grade packages detailing ways in which the software can be integrated into the classroom. Of special value are suggestions for presenting five strategies students can use for completing cloze passages: semantic, syntactic, graphophonic, pragmatic, and personal meaning strategies. These strategies and the extensive ideas presented for teaching them to students increase the value of the *Success with Reading* cloze practice as a learning experience.

Success with Reading has three other features not found in *M-ss-ng L-nks*. First, each of the grade specific packages comes with two copies of each of the six books used for creating the original cloze passages. These books are available for students to read after they complete the six cloze passages for each book. Second, all of the reading passages, both original and teacher-made, can be printed out on any standard printer. Passages can be printed either with or without blanks. This printing feature is extremely useful in instances when student access to the computer is limited. An entire class can get practice on cloze passages without having to use the computer. Finally, individual student results can be reviewed when the user list option is employed. When a student completes a cloze passage, the results are saved on a record (Figure 5) and can be reviewed later by the teacher on the computer or printed out as a hard copy record. The record lists the five most difficult words a student encountered. The number under each word indicates an approximate level of difficulty. These records can be used to determine whether the passages being completed by the student are either too easy or too difficult.

Deciding which of these two programs to use is not an easy task. Each contains excellent options and features that are unique. *M-ss-ng*

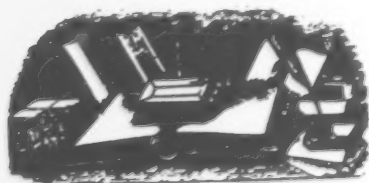
Figure 5



L-nks provides the student with more control in setting up the cloze practice format, and the two-player option allows the program to be used by more than one student. *Success with Reading* provides some excellent lesson plans to make the cloze practice truly educational, and the user list option enables the teacher to individualize program features for each student.

Since *M-ss-ng L-nks* was one of the first cloze procedure software programs to be published, it seems that the people at Scholastic liked what they saw in *M-ss-ng L-nks*, added a number of new features (upper/lower case type, printing capability, etc.), and came out with an improved version of *M-ss-ng L-nks* called *Success with Reading*. Don't be surprised if the folks at Sunburst come out with an improved version of *Success with Reading* by developing a new *M-ss-ng L-nks* that combines the best of both programs.

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Review of a resource

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James V. Hoffman, *Effective Teaching of Reading: Research and Practice*. 1986, International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware.

What teachers, reading specialists, principals, and researchers could use right now is a good synthesis of where we have been, what we know, and where we should be heading in the effective teaching of reading. IRA was right on the target in publishing this collection of reviews and reports. Unfortunately the quality of the chapters is mixed. Some are well-written and insightful; others are unclear and uninformative.

The book is divided into six sections: *The Historical Context*, *Process-Product Research*, *Research Into Practice*, *New Directions in Research and Effective Reading and Staff Development Efforts*, *Policy Into Practice-The Special Case of the Special Reading Teacher*, and a commentary. The authors of the chapters in each section are, with a few exceptions, well-known researchers and practitioners including (to mention only a few) Gerald Duffy, Deborah Ball, Laura Roehler, Robert Calfee, Marcia Henry, Richard Allington, and Mark Condon.

The first section, *The Historical Context*, helps create a perspective from which the remainder of the book can be structured. It is most appropriate to begin a review such as this with an historical background.

The second section, *Process-Product Research*, begins very well with a guide by James Hoffman to aid the reader and user of process-product research in evaluating the quality and significance of research using this methodological approach. Unfortunately, the remainder of this section is not of the same quality. The chapter by Jere Brophy is simply a rehash of articles published elsewhere discussing the first grade reading studies. The chapter by Jane Stallings covers a study less frequently reported in other sources but suffers from many of the flaws Hoffman warns against. Given the important role that process-

product research has had upon the educational community, a more careful review and analysis of a wider range of studies would have been more desirable.

The first chapter in the third section, *Research Into Practice*, alone justifies the purchase of this book. In this section Mark Condon and Marilyn Kapel review the processes of educational change in one district from 1959 to 1984. Such long term reviews appear all too rarely, and the results of this one would indicate that they should be done more frequently. The other two chapters in this section offer more traditional reports of staff development projects. Both offer the practitioner valuable ideas and structures that may be applicable in a variety of situations.

The next section, *New Directions in Research on Effective Reading and Staff Development Efforts*, offers three very good chapters covering a variety of the newer movements in the effective teaching of reading. Most of this work is related to teacher decision-making and planning. These three chapters will give all readers much to think about. The fourth chapter in this section, one covering the Madeline Hunter model of teacher effectiveness, is more than disappointing. The author, Renee Weisberg, does not take a clear position on the Hunter model, and as a result, it is difficult for the reader to formulate either an impression or an opinion regarding the Hunter model. This is especially disappointing since this model is currently very popular among school district central offices. A thoughtful and insightful review of the model as it applies to the teaching of reading would have been of great value.

The fifth section, *Policy Into Practice: The Special Case of the Special Reading Teacher*, has only one chapter. This, written by Richard Allington, is a very important review and analysis of the structure and effectiveness of special reading programs. All reading teachers and administrators responsible for Chapter I programs should read this. It is unfortunate that this is the only chapter in this section. Jim Ysseldyke and Bob Algozzine have also done important research about special programs that has implications for special reading teachers.

The last section is a reasonably good review of the collection by Rebecca Barr. In light of the task set before her, she probably did as well as could be expected. Trying to comment on such a mixed bag, both in topic and quality, of chapters would be a most difficult task. Barr has done so with clarity and offers the reader a framework in which to place all of the research reported. The wise reader might find this a valuable chapter to read first.

The book suffers from two major problems: insufficient synthesis of each section and the collective approach to authorship. The first

problem could have been easily prevented by having a review or analysis for each section rather than one at the end of the book. This approach, used in *Learning to Read in American Schools: Basal Readers and Content Texts*, helped to provide the reader with a well-rounded coverage and perspective on each topic covered.

Isabel L. Beck's review of the *Handbook of Reading Research*, P. David Pearson (Ed.) which appeared in the *Journal of Reading Behavior*, Volume VII, Number 1, is an excellent discussion of the second problem, what happens when more than three people write a book. As discussed by Beck and by Gerald Duffy and Laura Roehler (*Journal of Reading Behavior*, Volume XVI, Number 4), this approach to writing books about education and reading in particular is becoming extremely popular. The advantage is that this approach permits the "experts" on each topic to write the respective chapter. The disadvantage is that the end product seems disjointed and often only those who have a great deal of knowledge in the field can really make optimal use of the collection. The solution to this problem is probably to have the various authors meet from time to time to share drafts of their work and discuss ways to build structures and transitions that will allow the less well-initiated, as well as the expert in the field, to profit from the end product. This approach is perhaps too expensive; however, it may be an expense that we cannot eliminate. If reading experts fail to communicate understandably with novices and practitioners in their discipline, as well as interested parties like administrators and parents, they will soon find themselves without support or opportunities to make meaningful contributions to practices in the field.

Lee Ann Dubert is a doctoral candidate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is a teacher assistant with a specialty in secondary reading methods.

"America will become a nation of readers when **verified practices** of the **best teachers** in the **best schools** can be introduced throughout the country." *Becoming a Nation of Readers, p. 116*

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One result of the recent attention to reading in all areas by researchers has been the reintroduction and widespread use of the term "schema" and its plural form "schemata." The following is an attempt to provide a definition and discussion on the term, as it may relate to research and teaching.

What Are Schemata?

Schemata are the conceptual plans or structures that readers (for instance) bring to their understanding of a text. E. Marcia Sheridan has stated that the "System for storing and retrieving knowledge in memory is ... called schema theory. Schemata ... represent generic concepts which are stored in memory. These generic concepts include underlying objects, situations, events, actions, and sequences of actions. These objects, etc. are not atomic, but contain the network of interrelations with other constituent concepts. In other words, the way in which a particular concept is stored is not by remembering that isolated event in its totality down to its most basic components, but by identifying those aspects of the event related to other concepts already stored. In effect we make [connections] between the information in the text and what we already know. Thus schemata represent stereotypes of concepts."

What is an Example?

In essence, people store and arrange their experiences as schemata to use in interpreting new experiences. J. Jaap Tuinman offers an example:

A schema, quite simply put, is an abstraction of reality. Traveling much, I have a well-developed hotel room schema; I know the general layout of even new rooms: I know to expect a TV, telephone, a specific kind of furnishing, a notice of room rates, a heat/cooling control, etc. Note that my schema, though well fleshed out, is general. I don't know

the kind of TV, the type of temperature control, the specific arrangement of the furniture. Notice also that I have acquired this schema from experience, from repeated encounters with similar phenomena. Being capable of some learning, I have abstracted the features common to these phenomena and constructed a hotel room schema. Sporadically, I encounter an unfamiliar room. This is an occasion to revise and update my hotel room schemata.

Are All Schemata the Same?

No, all schemata are not the same. The reader must decide subconsciously what schemata are necessary for understanding the text. Two general kinds of schemata are described in "Effects of the Reader's Schema at Different Points in Time," a report by Richard Anderson, and others. The first type, "textual schemata," embodies knowledge of discourse conventions that signal organization, with specialized conventions characteristic of text forms and other conventions common to most text forms. These organizational schemata include a story schema, a personal letter schema, a news article schema, a scientific report schema, and so on. The second type of schemata, "content schemata," embodies the reader's existing knowledge of real and imaginary worlds. "What the reader already believes about a topic helps to structure the interpretation of new messages about this topic. There is good reason to believe that content schemata are more important to reading comprehension than textual schemata" (p. 4).

What Are the Implications for Teaching?

Dolores Durkin has gleaned two deceptively simple statements that summarize research on schemata. One is that "the more we know before we read, the more we learn when we read." The second, which she attributes to G.V. Glass, is that "the maintenance... of old knowledge is no less important than the discovery of new knowledge." These tenets emphasize the need for more diagnosis and prescription in reading instruction. That is, reading teachers and content area teachers need to be keenly aware of what their students bring into class as far as prior experiences and approaches to reading are concerned. Various pre-reading exercises should be conducted to acclimate students to the reading materials and to orient students toward the proper goals and expectations of the reading assignment.

Teachers will also need to expose the students to many varieties of textual schemata so that the children can get used to adjusting their reading habits to various reading tasks. It is generally accepted that reading a math text, reading a history lesson, reading a short story, and reading "Teen Magazine" do not require the same amounts of reading expertise. Schemata help to explain why this is so and suggest

what teachers can do to give students practice in adjusting their reading strategies.

Research on schemata suggests that teachers need to pay attention to the types of questions they ask when discussing reading assignments. Some children have enough background knowledge on a topic to give answers without reading assigned passages. In other cases teachers ask too many literal questions about the reading assignment, thereby focusing children's attention on bottom-up processing rather than stimulating their critical reading skills.

Basically, teachers should realize that schemata are simply ways of organizing information in memory, that schemata create expectations about what appears in print, and perhaps most important, teachers need to vary both questioning techniques and instructional content so that students can develop all the reading skills they will need to increase their comprehension of the world in print and the world in general.

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This symposium has been designed for educators who are interested in updating their knowledge of current thinking on selected factors that appear to influence students' reading performance. Factors identified for specific attention at the 1986 conference are: factors related to effective reading instruction, factors related to content area reading instruction, factors influencing reading ability, factors related to effective staff development to improve reading instruction, and affective factors in the teaching and learning of reading.

Program Format

State-of-the-art review sessions: In each of these sessions, a distinguished researcher and theory on a factor related to his/her area of expertise. Following each of these presentations, there will be time for questions and discussion.

Presentation of related papers: Topics addressed in the review and synthesis sessions will be examined further by educators who are active in reading and research and teaching. The papers in these sessions will pursue a particular line of research and its implications, or will offer a reaction/interpretation on a topic.

Special evening session: Sam Sebesta, Professor at the University of Washington in Seattle and author of a popular literature series for children, will demonstrate how to use literature to develop affective aspects of reading performance.

Credit Information

Graduate credits: Related graduate level seminars will be offered on certain university campuses during the 1986 Summer Session. Some campuses offer two or three lead-in on-campus class sessions preceding the symposium. Address inquiries regarding course content and special symposium fees for persons who enroll in a related seminar to the professor in charge on the campus of your choice. Use the following list to make your selection:

Dr. Robert Barganz, Department of Elementary Education, University of Wisconsin-EauClaire, 250 Brewer Hall, Eau Claire, WI 54701. Phone (715) 386-4407.

Dr. Don Benz, College of Professional Studies, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Stevens Point, WI 54481. Phone (715) 356-4353.

Dr. M. Jane Greenwald, University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse, 108 Morris Hall, LaCrosse, WI 54601. Phone (608) 785-8132.

Dr. Susan Masland, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, P.O. Box 13, Milwaukee, WI 43201. Phone (414) 963-5665.

Dr. Wayne Otto, 210 Teacher Education Building, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 225 North Mills Street, Madison, WI 53706. Phone (608) 263-6001.

Dr. Richard Telfer, 4050 Winther Hall, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, Whitewater, WI 53190. Phone (414) 472-1831.

Equivalency credit: Conference participants may receive 12 clock hours of equivalency credit to satisfy the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's continuing professional education requirement.

CEUs: Conference participants also may receive 1.2 continuing education units.

Agenda

Friday, June 13

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 8:00 a.m. | Registration |
| 8:45-10:00 a.m. | Factors Related to Effective Reading Instruction
"Becoming a Nation of Readers: Implementing the Findings of the Commission on Reading"
<i>Elfrieda Hiebert, Staff, Becoming a Nation of Readers</i> |
| 10:00-10:30 a.m. | Questions and Answers
<i>Susan Masland, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee</i> |
| 10:30-11:00 a.m. | Break |
| 11:00-12:00 noon | Related Papers and Discussion
"Talk...Read...Talk...Listen: Implications of Oral Language Development for Reading Instruction"
<i>Beverly Morrison, Fairfax County (Virginia) Public Schools</i> |

- "Learning to Talk Like Texts: The Effects of Schooling on Oral Language Department"
Kaybeth Camperell, University of Southern Mississippi
Noon-1:30 p.m. Lunch Break
1:30-2:45 p.m. Factors Related to Content Area Reading Instruction
 "Why Teachers Resist Content Area Reading Instruction"
Donna Alvermann, University of Georgia
2:45-3:15 p.m. Questions and Answers
Donald Benz, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
3:15-3:45 p.m. Break
3:45-4:45 p.m. Related Papers and Discussion
 "Content Area Teachers and Reading Skills Instruction"
Roger Eldridge, East Carolina University
 "A Modification of SQ3R for Today's Students"
Kathy Koch, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
4:45-5:00 p.m. Brief Meeting of Seminar Registrants
5:00-8:00 p.m. Dinner Break
8:00-9:00 p.m. Special Evening Session
 "When Factors Fail..."
Sam Sebesta, University of Washington
9:00-9:30 p.m. Questions and Answers
Wayne Otto, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Saturday, June 14

- 8:45-10:00 a.m. Factors Influencing Reading Ability**
 "Should Reading Be Taught?"
Ronald Carver, University of Missouri-Kansas City
10:00-10:30 a.m. Questions and Answers
Robert Barganz, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
10:30-11:00 a.m. Break
11:00-12:00 noon Related Papers and Discussion
 "Using Self-Questioning to Enhance Metacognition of the Organization and Demands of Text"
Louise Tomlinson, University of Georgia
 "Factors Related to Effective Critical Reading—Problem Solving"
Richard Telfer, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
Noon-1:30 p.m. Lunch Break
1:30-2:45 p.m. Factors in Effective Staff Development
 "Teacher Training Models: Top-Down, Bottom-Up and Interactive Factors"
Lawrence Erickson, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
2:45-3:15 p.m. Questions and Answers
Jane Greenwald, University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse
3:15-3:45 p.m. Break
3:45-4:45 p.m. Related Papers and Discussion
 "Staff Development: All for One and One for All; Plus... Everyone for Himself"
Roger Klumb, Menominee Indian School District
 "Staff Development: Can the Gulf Between Research and Practice Be Bridged?"
Eunice Bethke, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

General Information

DATES AND TIMES:

June 13, 1986, 8:00 a.m.-9:30 p.m.

June 14, 1986, 8:45 a.m.-4:45 p.m.

PLACE: Park East Hotel, 916 East State Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202, (414) 276-8800.

COST: \$75.00 includes registration, conference proceedings and coffee. This fee does not cover lodging. Special fees will be charged students who enroll in a related seminar. Address inquiries to the contact person on the campus of your choice.

INFORMATION: Please address specific questions regarding the symposium to:

Sandra White
456A Teacher Education Building
University of Wisconsin-Madison
225 North Mills Street
Madison, WI 53706
(608) 263-6527

Registration Form

Factors Related To Reading Performance

Pre-Registration cut-off date is Friday, May 30, 1986.

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Social Security No.: _____

(Not mandatory - used only to ensure accessibility and accuracy of your educational record)

Phone — Home No.: Area Code () _____

Phone — Daytime No.: Area Code () _____

Make check payable to *University of Wisconsin-Extension*.

Mail check for \$75.00 and registration form to:

Madison Registration Office
101 Extension Building
432 North Lake Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

This information is collected to enhance the programming efforts of University of Wisconsin-Extension and is voluntary.

SEX: ☐ Female ☐ Male

BIRTHDATE: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

HERITAGE: ☐ American Indian ☐ Asian ☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ White or Other

OCCUPATIONAL AREA

☐ 100 Professional, technical and managerial occupations

☐ 700 Other Occupations _____

This program is supported in part by funds administered through UW-Extension as part of a coordinated statewide Extension program.

Please advise us at time of registration if you are handicapped and desire special accommodations. Requests will be kept confidential.

UW-Madison provides equal opportunities in employment and programming including Title IX requirements.

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**Wisconsin State Reading Association
Program Proposal**

WSRA FALL CONFERENCE

September 26-27, 1986

Embassy Suites Hotel, Green Bay, Wisconsin

1. TITLE OF PROGRAM (be descriptive) _____

2. MAJOR PRESENTER _____

Position/Title _____ School District/Institution _____

Address/Zip _____

Telephone: Home () _____ Work () _____

Local Reading Council _____

Additional Presenters (Name, Address, Zip and Phone) _____

3. TYPE OF PROGRAM:

- ☐ Workshop ☐ Demonstration ☐ Other
☐ Lecture/Talk ☐ Panel

4. INTENDED AUDIENCE: Check all that apply

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ☐ Preschool | ☐ High School | ☐ Admin./Supr. |
| ☐ K - 3 | ☐ Jr. College | ☐ Teach. Prep. |
| ☐ Grades 4-6 | ☐ Adult | ☐ Parents |
| ☐ Middle School | ☐ Specialists | ☐ Chapter I |
| ☐ Other (Specify) | | |

5. EQUIPMENT:

Due to limited resources, please try to bring any equipment other than specified here.

- ☐ Overhead Proj. ☐ Screen ☐ Chalkboard ☐ Table

6. ABSTRACT: Please attach to this form an abstract of no more than 75 words describing the content of your program. This may be included in the convention program to aid those attending to select programs.

7. Programs should fit a 50 minute time period. If additional time is needed, a special request must be indicated.

8. Program participants do not receive an honorarium. In accordance with IRA and WSRA policy, program participants are expected to pay for their own registration fees if they wish to attend other events in the conference.

9. 1986 WSRA FALL CONFERENCE PROPOSALS DUE JUNE 20, 1986

Return proposal form to:

DR. MARY JETT-SIMPSON
9056 N. Fielding
Milwaukee, WI 53217

THE FACES OF CHANGE IN READING EDUCATION

FALL CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 26-27, 1986

Embassy Suites Hotel, Green Bay, Wisconsin

Keynote Speakers

Scott Paris
University of Michigan

Donna Ogle
National College

Peter Johnson
State U of New York, Albany

Registration Procedure

A block of 200 rooms has been reserved at the Embassy Suites Hotel. All Embassy reservations must be made directly by telephone or mail and made on or before September 5, 1986. Address inquires to: Embassy Suites Hotel, 333 Main Street, Green Bay, WI 54301 — Phone: 414-432-4555.

W.S.R.A. Fall Conference Registration Form

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

University Affiliation _____
(For Student Registration)

I will be attending:

Friday Only (Dinner and Keynote Speaker)

☐ Member \$15.00 ☐ Non-member \$17.00

Saturday Only (Sectionals, Luncheon, Speaker)

☐ Member \$20.00 ☐ Non-member \$22.00

Both Friday and Saturday Sessions

☐ Member \$33.00 ☐ Non-member \$40.00

Student Registration

☐ Friday \$15.00 ☐ Saturday \$10.00

Enclose this form with check payable to: Wisconsin State Reading Association and mail to: Dorene Dufek, 2503 Jenny Lane, #8, Green Bay, Wisconsin 54302. All conference registrations should be completed and mailed before Monday, September 22, 1986.

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Membership is for one year from the date of joining.

Renewal ☐New ☐

Address/name change ☐

****Please make check for \$6.50 payable to WSRA.**

Mail to:

WSRA Membership Committee
6130 W. Wisconsin Avenue
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Foreign Membership \$8.50

Check if also interested in receiving mailings from:

Secondary Reading ☐

Chapter 1 □

PUBLICATION POLICY

The *Wisconsin State Reading Association Journal* seeks articles that are aimed at improving the quality of reading instruction. Each issue is developed around a pre-determined theme; however, articles not related to the theme but deserving publication are encouraged. Themes for Volume 30 are as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Volume 30, Number 1 | Theme: Effective Use of Texts |
| Volume 30, Number 2 | Theme: Integrating Reading and Language Arts |
| Volume 30, Number 3 | Theme: Effecting Change in Reading Programs |
| Volume 30, Number 4 | Theme: Literature and Reading |

The *WSRA Journal* accepts articles from WSRA members, from Wisconsin educators, and from other reading and language arts specialists in other states. Prospective authors are requested to:

1. write material which would be of interest to our readers -- reading specialists, classroom teachers, and other educators interested in reading.
2. submit manuscripts which have not been previously published for anonymous peer review on or before the stated deadline.
3. construct material that has a clearly identifiable focus or main idea.
4. submit articles (3 copies) that are typed double-spaced and provide a stamped self-addressed envelope for the return of the original copy. Original copies accepted for publication are not returned to the author.
5. give complete bibliographical information for each source quoted or paraphrased. APA style should be used for all citations and references.

The editor retains the right to edit for style and clarity.

Manuscripts and correspondence concerning editorial matters should be addressed to:

**Michael P. French, Editor
WSRA JOURNAL
144 E. Burnett Street
Beaver Dam, WI 53916**

Wisconsin State Reading Association

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Back copies may be obtained for \$3.00 each postpaid. Requests for these and correspondence on editorial matters may be sent to the *Journal* Editor. Refer to the preceding page for information regarding manuscripts.

FOCUS is the bi-annual newsletter published by the Secondary Reading Committee. For information contact the Editor.

Wisconsin Reading Update is the official newsletter of the Wisconsin State Reading Association. For information contact the Editor.